



Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan DRAFT

May 12, 2011

For

State/Territory:

North Carolina Region IV

FFY 2012-2013

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be administered by the State/Territory for the period 10/1/2011 – 9/30/2013. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including amending the options selected or described herein.

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

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

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

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**PART 1
ADMINISTRATION**

This section provides information on how the CCDF program is administered, including the designated Lead Agency, funding information, the administrative structure, program integrity and accountability policies and strategies, coordination efforts, and emergency preparedness plans and procedures.

1.1 Contact Information

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

1.1.1 Who is the Lead Agency designated to administer the CCDF program? Identify the Lead Agency and Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer designated by the State/Territory. ACF will send official grant correspondence such as grant awards, grant adjustments, Plan approvals and disallowance notifications to the designated contact identified here. (658D(a), §98.10)

Name of Lead Agency: NC Division of Child Development
Address of Lead Agency:
Physical Address: 319 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120, Raleigh, NC
Mailing Address: 2201 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2201
Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer:
Dr. Deborah Cassidy, Division Director
Phone Number: 919-662-4499
Fax Number: 919-662-4568
E-Mail Address: Deb.Cassidy@dhhs.nc.gov
Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.ncchildcare.net

1.1.2. Who is the CCDF administrator? Identify the CCDF administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, with responsibility for administering the State/Territory's CCDF program. ACF will send programmatic communications such as program announcements, program instructions, and data collection instructions to the designated contact identified here. **If there is more than one designated contact with equal or shared responsibility for administering the CCDF program, please identify the co-administrator or entity with administrative responsibilities and include contact information.** (§§98.16(a) and (c)(1))

a) **Contact Information for CCDF Administrator:**
Name of CCDF Administrator: Dr. Deborah Cassidy

Title of CCDF Administrator: Director NC Division OF Child Development

Address of CCDF Administrator:

Physical Address: 319 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120, Raleigh, NC

Mailing Address: 2201 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2201

Phone Number: 919-662-4499

Fax Number: 919-662-4568

E-Mail Address: Deb.Cassidy@dhhs.nc.gov

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.ncchildcare.net

Phone Number for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any): 919 662-4499

Web Address for CCDF program (for the public) (if any): www.ncchildcare.net

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

Web address for CCDF program administrative rules: (if any): http://nrkids.org/STATES/NC/nc_9.pdf

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

Name of CCDF Co-Administrator: N/A

Title of CCDF Co-Administrator: N/A

Address of CCDF Co-Administrator: N/A

Phone Number: N/A

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: N/A

Web Address for Co-Administrator (if any): N/A

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator: N/A

1.2 Estimated Funding

1.2.1. What is your expected level of funding for the first year of the FY 2012 – FY 2013 plan period? The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012. (§98.13(a)).

FY 2012 CCDF allocation: \$TBD – not yet provided from Fed

Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: \$82,210,675

Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: \$61,087,077

State CCDF Maintenance-of-Effort Funds: \$37,927,282

State Matching Funds: \$28,937,864

Quality Funds: \$ TBD – Not yet provided from Federal Government

Reminder – Lead Agencies are reminded that not more than 5 percent of the aggregate CCDF funds, including federal funds and required State Matching funds, shall be expended on administration costs (§98.52) once all FY2012 funds

have been liquidated. State Maintenance-of-Effort funds are not subject to this limitation.

1.2.2. Which of the following funds does the Lead Agency intend to use to meet the CCDF Matching and maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirements described in 98.53(e) and 98.53(h)? Check all that apply.

Note: The Lead Agency must check at least public and/or private funds as matching, even if pre-kindergarten (pre-k) funds also will be used.

Public funds to meet the CCDF Matching Fund requirement. Public funds may include any general revenue funds, county or other local public funds, State/Territory-specific funds (tobacco tax, lottery), or any other public funds.

If checked, identify source of funds: General Revenue

Private donated funds to meet the CCDF Matching Funds requirement. Only private funds received by the designated entities or by the Lead Agency may be counted for match purposes. (98.53(f))

If checked, are those funds:

donated directly to the State?

donated to a separate entity(ies) designated to receive private donated funds?

If checked, identify the number of entities designated to receive private donated funds and provide name, address, contact, and type _____

State expenditures for pre-k programs to meet the CCDF Matching Funds requirement. If checked,

Provide the estimated percentage of Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-k expenditures (not to exceed 30%): _____

If percentage is more than 10% of the Matching fund requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its pre-k and child care services: _____

Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that pre-k programs meet the needs of working parents: _____

State expenditures for pre-k programs to meet the CCDF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. If checked,

The Lead Agency assures that its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to 98.53(h)(1).

Estimated percentage of MOE Fund requirement that will be met with pre-k expenditures (not to exceed 20%): _____

If percentage is more than 10% of the MOE requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its pre-k and child care services to expand the availability of child care: _____

Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that pre-k programs meet the needs of working parents:

To ensure parents have access to pre-k programs subsidy funds provide wrap-around care to accommodate parents needing full-day child care services.

1.3. CCDF Program Integrity and Accountability

Program integrity is defined to include efforts that ensure effective internal controls over the administration of CCDF funds. The Lead Agency is responsible for monitoring programs and services, ensuring compliance with the rules of the program, promulgating rules and regulations to govern the overall administration of the plan and oversee the expenditure of funds by sub-grantees and contractors. (§ 98.11(b)) Accountability measures should address administrative error, which includes unintentional agency error, **as well as to address** program violations, both unintentional and intentional, that may or may not result in further action by the Lead Agency, including those cases suspected of and/or prosecuted for fraud.

1.3.1. Describe the strategies the Lead Agency will utilize to ensure effective internal controls are in place. The **description** of internal controls may include, but is not limited to a description of processes to ensure sound fiscal management, to identify areas of risk or to establish regular evaluation of control activities.

Child Care Resource and Referral: Child care resource and referral (CCR&R) services, funded through the Division of Child Development's quality initiatives, link families, early care and education providers, and community partners. This linkage allows families to have a single point of access when requesting and receiving assistance in identifying child care options in their area, making informed decisions about child care choices, and matching needs to available resources. CCR&R services are available in all of North Carolina's 100 counties and delivered by local agencies.

The Division of Child Development requires performance-based outcomes in its contracts with the CCR&R Council, which is responsible for ensuring the outcomes of regional CCR&R's. Division of Child Development staff frequently perform financial monitoring with the three CCR&R Council agencies to ensure that contract outcomes are met and that CCDF quality funds are spent appropriately.

Quality Activities: For activities funded with CCDF quality dollars, the Division of Child Development's Center of Excellence is the venue used to provide systematic review and evaluation of proposals being considered for funding. Its members participate in strategic planning to ensure that all funded programs reflect the goals of the Division of Child Development, comply with all CCDF regulations, and have measureable outcomes.

Formal contracts stipulate the services to be rendered by the contractor, outline specific budget line items, and require assurances/certifications that funding will be used for approved purposes. All contracts are performance-based to ensure that each has specifically defined program outcomes and measures. Once contracts are approved and initiated, the Division of Child Development follows a comprehensive monitoring plan to assess contractor compliance with all fiscal and programmatic requirements. Contractors typically submit monthly financial status reports to receive contract funding based on actual expenses incurred.

Subsidy Activities: The subsidy services section of the Division of Child Development conducts on-going monitoring and technical assistance visits to each local agency administering the program. Technical Assistance is provided to each agency each year. In these visits a defined number of records are reviewed for accuracy utilizing a checklist containing nineteen items reflecting activities of the local agency from the application through payment for the service.

1.3.2 Describe the processes the Lead Agency will use to monitor all sub-recipients. Lead Agencies that use other governmental or non-governmental sub-recipients to administer the program must have written agreements in place outlining roles and responsibilities for meeting CCDF requirements. (98.11 (a) (3))

Definition: A sub-recipient (including a sub-contractor and or sub-grantee) is a non-Federal entity that expends Federal awards (contract or grant) received from another entity to carry out a Federal program, but does not include a vendor nor does it include an individual who is a beneficiary of such a program. OMB Circular A-133 Section 210 provides additional information on the characteristics of a **sub-recipient** and **vendor** (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2010).

The description of monitoring may include, but is not limited to, a discussion of written agreements, fiscal management, review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with CCDF regulations, monitoring/auditing contractors or grantees to ensure that eligible children are served and eligibility documentation is verified, and establishing performance indicators or measures.

Quality Activities: Program monitoring occurs on a comprehensive level and includes varying levels of oversight depending on the (sub) contractor and situation. Each approved contract has a designated contract administrator who is employed by the Division, and who reviews the contract's activities, approves monthly financial expenditure reports, authorizes payment, and assures that quarterly and/or annual program reports are completed as required by the terms of the contract. An annual desk audit, done by the contract administrator, is used to assess the risk (high, moderate or low) of each contract, which guides the evaluation and monitoring process, and determines monitoring priorities. An internal control questionnaire must be completed by the contractor to report

staffing patterns, programmatic supervision, service delivery and management control systems. Once the desk audit and internal questionnaire are completed and reviewed, the risk level of the contract is determined.

Contracts that are strictly financial assistance contracts and any contract determined to be “high risk,” are automatically selected for an on-site monitoring visit, which is conducted by the Division’s monitoring team. Monitoring visits perform programmatic and fiscal reviews per the requirements of OMB Circular A-133 and NCGS 143C-6.23. The results of the monitoring visits are presented in a formal written report, which is sent to the contractor to resolve and correct any noncompliance issues.

Subsidy: The subsidy services section of the Division of Child Development conducts on-going monitoring and technical assistance visits to each local agency administering the program. Monitoring is completed on a three-year cycle. Technical Assistance is provided to each agency each year. In these visits a defined number of records are reviewed for accuracy utilizing a checklist containing nineteen items reflecting activities of the local agency from the application through payment for the service. In addition to monitoring by the Division, each local agency has the option to complete internal reviews. Many agencies utilize the Division’s checklist to complete internal reviews. When errors are found in monitoring or agency internal reviews, those errors are corrected from the point of discovery to the point of origin. When errors are discovered in Technical Assistance reviews, errors are corrected from the point of discovery forward and target training is provided as needed to address the reason for the error’s occurrence.

1.3.3. Describe the activities the Lead Agency will have in place to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure program integrity using the chart below. Program violations may include intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations as defined by the Lead Agency. Administrative error refers to **areas identified through the Error Rate Review** process (98.100). Check which activities, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct.

Type of Activity	Identify Program Violations	Identify Administrative Error
Share/match data from other programs (e.g. TANF, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Run system reports that flag errors (include types)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review of attendance or billing records	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Audit provider records	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conduct quality control or quality assurance reviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conduct supervisory staff reviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Type of Activity	Identify Program Violations	Identify Administrative Error
Conduct data mining to identify trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Train staff on policy and/or audits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other. Describe _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Optional) If the Lead Agency checked any option in the chart above other than none, please describe

The most important thing North Carolina does to reduce errors and maintain errors at a minimal level is implementation of an ongoing monitoring program. All local purchasing agencies are officially monitored every three years on a rotating cycle. The sample selected is 8% of the cases receiving a payment with a floor of 5 and a ceiling of 150. Additionally, technical assistance staff read a sample of records each year with the goal of identifying training needs. The technical assistance staff sample 2% of the cases receiving a payment, with a floor of 10 and a ceiling of 60. These processes have been in place for more than 5 years. These processes are implemented using excel spreadsheets that maximize the time that can be spent face to face with local purchasing agency staff in training and technical assistance. Child support policies are currently under evaluation by DCD's policy unit and this may streamline the calculation of child support and reduce errors. Technical Assistance staff will be asked to provide targeted training to address the errors noted. This targeted training will be completed with all local purchasing agencies, not just the ones where errors were noted. Additional training named "Calculating with Accuracy" is under development in the DCD policy unit as well. This training will provide some techniques for reducing human errors associated with management of child care records.

1.3.4. What strategies will the Lead Agency use to investigate and collect improper payments due to program violations or administrative error? Check and describe in the chart below which strategies, if any, the Lead Agency will use for each of the following areas: Unintentional program violations (UPV), intentional program violations (IPV) and/or fraud, and administrative error as defined in your State/Territory. **The Lead Agency has the flexibility to recover misspent funds as a result of errors. The Lead Agency is required to recover misspent funds as a result of fraud (98.60(i)).**

Strategy	UPV	IPV and/or Fraud	Administrative Error
]Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment. Identify the minimum dollar amount	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement). Describe _____

Recover through repayment plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduce payments in subsequent months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recover through other means. Describe _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments. Describe composition of unit _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other. Describe _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Optional) If the Lead Agency checked any option in the chart above other than none, please describe North Carolina has ongoing monitoring activities. In those activities errors are corrected not only from the point of discovery forward but to the point of origin.

1.3.5. What type of sanction, if any, will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations?

- None
- Disqualify client. If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified
After the first incidence of fraudulent misrepresentation by a recipient, the recipient shall be ineligible to receive subsidized child care services for 12 months; and
After the second incidence of fraudulent misrepresentation by a recipient, the recipient shall be permanently ineligible to participate in the subsidized child care program.
A recipient may appeal any sanction imposed for fraudulent misrepresentation by following the appeals procedures used by the Division as codified in 10A NCAC 09 .2004 - .2007.
- Disqualify provider. If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified
After the first incidence of fraudulent misrepresentation by a provider, the provider shall not be reimbursed with subsidized child care funds for any new children that enroll in the provider's program for twelve months; and
After the second incidence of fraudulent misrepresentation by a provider, the provider shall be permanently ineligible to participate in the subsidized child care program.
A child care provider may appeal any sanction imposed for fraudulent misrepresentation by following the appeals procedures used by the Division pursuant to G.S. 150B-23.

- Prosecute criminally
- Other. Describe. ____

1.3.6. Based on responses provided from Question 14 in the most recent ACF-402 report, please describe those actions the Lead Agency has taken or plans to take to reduce identified errors in the table below. Territories not required to complete the Error Rate Review should mark N/A here.

Activities identified in ACF-402	Actions Taken or Planned
<p><u>North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) is in development. The contract has been awarded to Curam. An integrator is currently being chosen to customize the needed modules. The implementation of NC FAST will streamline the processes used by the local purchasing agencies in the determination of eligibility. There is a feature in the case management module for income calculation. In this module, income is entered into the system and the conversion to monthly income and calculation of parental fee is done automatically. We believe this will reduce errors in calculation.</u></p> <p><u>A Request for Proposal (RFP) for an automated attendance tracking and payment delivery system developed by DCD is currently out for bid. This system, if approved and awarded in accordance with the requirements in the RFP, will automatically select the payment rate based on a combination of the child(ren)'s birth dates and the facility selected. This will reduce errors made when the worker has to manually select and enter the payment rate.</u></p>	<p><u>NC FAST is being developed.</u></p> <p><u>The Division of Child Development has contracted with Affiliated Computer Services (ACS) State & Local Solutions, Inc. to develop and implement a statewide system for subsidized child care attendance reporting and payment delivery. The system is called Subsidized Early Education for Kids (SEEK). SEEK will provide more efficient attendance reporting and a payment system. Beginning with a pilot in June 2011, SEEK should be fully implemented in all 100 counties by the end of February 2012.</u></p>

1.4. Consultation in the Development of the CCDF Plan

Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies in the development of its CCDF Plan (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)).

Definition: *Consultation* involves the meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State or Territory CCDF Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments. (§§98.12(b), 98.14(a)(1))

1.4.1. Identify and describe in the table below who the Lead Agency consulted with in the development of the CCDF Plan (658D(b)(2), §§98.12(b), 98.14(b)).

	Agency/Entity	Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with this Agency/entity in developing the CCDF Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Representatives of general purpose local government (required)</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to: representatives from counties and municipalities, local human service agencies, local education representatives (e.g., school districts), or local public health agencies.</p>	<p>Sent for review to Division of Social Services and Local Purchasing Agencies; Local Smart Start Partnerships; Regional Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, etc.</p>
<p>For the remaining agencies, check and describe (optional) any which the Lead Agency has chosen to consult with in the development of its CCDF Plan.</p>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>State/Territory agency responsible for public education</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to, State/Territory pre-kindergarten programs (if applicable), programs serving school-age children (including 21st Century Community Learning Centers), or higher education.</p>	<p>Sent for review to the Office of Early Learning (Administrator of “More at Four” – Pre-K program in NC)</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>State/Territory agency responsible for programs for children with special needs</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to: State/Territory early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool), or other State/Territory agencies that support children with special needs</p>	<p>Sent for review to the Office of Early Intervention (Part C) and the Office of Early Learning (Part B)</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>State/Territory agency responsible for licensing (if separate from the Lead Agency)</p>	

	Agency/Entity	Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with this Agency/entity in developing the CCDF Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency with the Head Start Collaboration grant	Sent for review to the Head Start Collaboration Office Director
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Statewide Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act	Sent for review to Early Childhood Advisory Commission (ECAC)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services	Sent for review to the North Carolina Partnership for Children (Smart Start Administrative Agency)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	Sent for review to the Division of Public Health
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visitation programs grant	Sent for review to the Section Chief for Maternal & Child Health within the Division of Public Health
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health)	Sent for review to the Division of Public Health
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare	Sent for review to the Division of Social Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory liaison for military child care programs or other military child care representatives	Sent for review to NC Military Liaison for the Department of Defense
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development	Sent for review to the Division of Social Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF)	Sent for review to the Division of Social Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> N/A: No such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	Sent for review to a representative of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private agencies/entities including national initiatives that the Lead Agency is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide After-school Networks, Ready by 21	Sent to the NC Comprehensive Systems Grant Director (BUILD funded) and the NC Center for Afterschool Programs funded (Mott funded)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provider groups, associations or labor	Sent for review to the NC

	Agency/Entity	Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with this Agency/entity in developing the CCDF Plan
	organizations	Association for the Education of Young Children, the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals, the NC Licensed Child Care Association, and the Wake County Family Child Care Association
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent groups or organizations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local community organizations (child care resource and referral, Red Cross)	Sent for review to the Regional Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

1.4.2. Describe the Statewide/Territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description should include:

- a) Date(s) of notice of public hearing: 20 **Reminder** - Must be at least 20 days prior to the date of the public hearing.
- b) How was the public notified about the public hearing? The public hearing notice was posted on the DCD website, sent as an email to all agency partners, sent as an email to child care providers (greater than 65% of providers have email addresses registered with DCD) and posted on the Dept. of Health & Human Services website
- b) Date(s) of public hearing(s): June 2, 2011 **Reminder** - Must be no earlier than 9 months before effective date of Plan (October 1, 2011).
- c) Hearing site(s): The Division of Child Development and virtually through a conference call system.
- d) How was the content of the Plan made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s)? The plan was posted to the DCD website in May, 2011 and the website where the plan could be accessed was included in the public notice.
- e) How will the information provided by the public be taken into consideration in the provision of child care services under this Plan? All comments will be compiled and reviewed by CCDF lead agency and incorporated to the extent possible by management and section contacts before the plan is finalized.

1.5. Coordination Activities to Support the Implementation of CCDF Services

Lead Agencies are required to *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)).

Definition - *Coordination* involves child care and early childhood and school-age development services efforts to work across multiple entities, both public and private (such as in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or the State Advisory Council funded under the Head Start Act of 2007). (658D(b)(1)(D), §§98.12(a), 98.14(a)(1))

1.5.1. Identify and describe in the table below who the Lead Agency coordinates with in the delivery of child care and early childhood and school-age services (§98.14(a)(1)).

<p>Agency/Entity (check all that apply)</p>	<p>Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services</p>	<p>Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination</p> <p>Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies.</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Representatives of general purpose local government (required)</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to: representatives from counties and municipalities, local human service agencies, local education representatives (e.g., school districts), or local public health agencies.</p>	<p>DCD will coordinate with the state Division of Social Services and representatives from the county level DSS offices to integrate eligibility policies, and streamline services.</p> <p>DCD will also coordinate efforts with More at Four, the NC pre-K program by taking on the monitoring functions for More at Four classrooms in private child care settings.</p>	<p>We expect to continue a coordinated system of services with local DSS agencies to provide “one-stop shops” for families that seek related services. Streamlined eligibility policies have already begun in that families who have been deemed eligible for Food & Nutrition services are automatically deemed eligible for child care subsidy services.</p> <p>We expect to also streamline services and create efficiencies through the use of DCD licensing consultants in their role in monitoring More at Four classrooms.</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/Territory agency responsible for</p>	<p>The coordination</p>	<p>Results include:</p>

<p>Agency/Entity (check all that apply)</p>	<p>Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services</p>	<p>Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination</p>
<p>public education (required)</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to, State/Territory pre-kindergarten programs (if applicable), programs serving school-age children (including 21st Century Community Learning Centers), or higher education.</p>	<p>effort with More at Four described above will be made possible through a collaboration with the Office of Early Learning in the NC Department of Public Instruction.</p> <p>DCD also will coordinate with the Birth-Kindergarten Consortium and the Community College System office to ensure alignment of DCD goals with higher education coursework objectives.</p> <p>DCD will financially support local Community Colleges in their efforts to obtain NAEYC program accreditation.</p> <p>DCD will work with the Community College system to promote articulation of early childhood AAS degree programs with 4-year universities.</p>	<p>Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A streamlined monitoring process for More at Four classrooms in private child care settings. - alignment of DCD goals with higher education -increased number of NC Community Colleges with accredited early childhood degree programs - articulation agreements in place for early childhood AAS degree programs - the school-age perspective is included in DCD policy change efforts
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies</p>	<p>DCD will coordinate with the Association</p>	<p>The Child Care Commission will be</p>

	Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination
	providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services (required)	of Developmental Day Directors and the Exceptional Children's Division of the Department of Public Instruction to get input on child care rules, now that developmental day centers have been moved to DCD for oversight purposes.	Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies. provided with the Developmental Day perspective when making rule changes that impact this population.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for public health (required) This may include, but is not limited to, the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health	DCD will coordinate with the Division of Public Health (DPH) to get input on child care rules related to health issues. DCD will coordinate with the Maternal & Child Health Section at DPH to ensure that information is shared and aligned to support the Home Visitation project.	The Child Care Commission will be provided with the Public Health perspective when making rule changes that impact the health & well-being of children in child care. Shared information will be available to providers about the DPH Home Visitation project and Project Launch.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for employment services / workforce development (required)	DCD will coordinate with the Division of Social Services to streamline access for families involved in Work First or TANF recipients.	We expect to continue a coordinated system of services with local DSS agencies to provide "one-stop shops" for families that seek related services. Streamlined eligibility policies have already begun in that families who have been deemed eligible for Food & Nutrition services are automatically deemed eligible for child care subsidy services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for	DCD will coordinate	We expect to continue a

	Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination
	providing Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF) (required)	with the Division of Social Services to streamline access for families involved in Work First or TANF recipients.	Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies. coordinated system of services with local DSS agencies to provide “one-stop shops” for families that seek related services. Streamlined eligibility policies have already begun in that families who have been deemed eligible for Food & Nutrition services are automatically deemed eligible for child care subsidy services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations (required) <input type="checkbox"/> N/A: No such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	DCD will coordinate efforts to promote culturally responsive care with representatives from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	DCD is contracting with NC A&T University on a project to create a framework for increased cultural competent practices in child care. A representative from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is a member of the expert panel working on the project.
For the remaining agencies, check and describe (optional) any with which the Lead Agency has chosen to coordinate early childhood and school-age service delivery			
<input type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for licensing (if separate from the Lead Agency)	N/A – within the lead agency	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency with the Head Start Collaboration grant	DCD will coordinate efforts with the Head Start Collaboration project by supporting Head Start programs through child care licensure services.	Head Start programs are typically licensed through the DCD Regulatory System for coordination and alignment of services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Statewide Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act	The Director of DCD will serve as a member of the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and will work	Goals of the ECAC include: - Planning for the development of an integrated data system - Supporting NAEYC

	Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination
		to coordinate efforts to meet the goals established by the ECAC.	Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies. accreditation of early childhood programs in Community Colleges - Supporting the development of articulation agreements for AAS degree students - Embarking on a public awareness campaign to help inform the public about the importance of the early years in child development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	DCD will coordinate with the Division of Public Health to continue to align child care licensing standards with CACFP requirements.	Child care programs must meet CACFP nutrition standards whether or not they participate in the CACFP program.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for programs for children with special needs This may include, but is not limited to: State/Territory early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool), or other State/Territory agencies that support children with special needs	DCD coordinates services with the Coordinator within the Division of Public Health that is responsible for Part C services. DCD also coordinates services with the Section 619 Coordinator at the Office of Early Learning.	DCD maintains representation on the State Interagency Coordinating Council. DCD is also an active participant on the steering committee for the NC grant with the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visitation programs grant	DCD has been an active member of the planning committee for the NC Home Visiting Program funded through the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood	DCD plans to support the program by using the program to help raise awareness about quality care, connect families to child care if they are not currently using regulated care, and promote

Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination	
	Home Visiting Program in the Affordable Care Act	Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies. licensing of Family, Friend, & Neighbor care when the home visiting program becomes involved with families in those settings	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare	DCD will coordinate with the Division of Social Services to streamline access for families in the child welfare system.	We expect to continue a coordinated system of services with local DSS agencies to provide “one-stop shops” for families that seek related services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Territory liaison for military child care programs or other military child care representatives	DCD will coordinate services for military families through our work with the federal military liaison and also through the collaborative relationship established with the representative from the military that serves on the DCD QRIS Advisory Committee.	We expect that communication will be strengthened through these partnerships, and that the military perspective can be incorporated into DCD initiatives.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private agencies/entities including national initiatives that the Lead Agency is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide After-school Networks, Ready by 21	DCD has worked with the Coordinator of the Comprehensive Systems Grant funded through the BUILD initiative and also with the Mott project that is funded through the NC Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP)	We expect that this coordination of services will help to increase communication and awareness of the projects within the child care community.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local community organizations (child care resource and referral, Red Cross)	DCD contracts with the NC Child Care Resource & Referral Council to provide coordinated CCR&R	The CCDF contract for CCR&R ensures that coordinated services are provided in 14 CCR&R regions so that all

Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination	
	services across the state.	providers have access to the core CCR&R services of Technical Assistance, Professional Development & Training, Consumer Education & Referral, etc.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provider groups, associations or labor organizations	DCD coordinates efforts and collaborates with various provider organizations including: NCaeyc, the NC Licensed Child Care Association, NC CAP, the Institute for Child Development Professionals, and the Wake County Family Child Care Association.	These coordination efforts ensure that the voice of the provider community is at the table when DCD planning occurs. These provider groups are consulted on the CCDF plan, through the QRIS Advisory Committee, the DCD Professional Development Advisory Committee, and the DCD Early Learning Collaborative.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parent groups or organizations	Parents are represented on the Child Care Commission as described below.	DCD makes every effort to include a parent representative on collaborative groups so that the parent perspective is included when decisions are made. Parents are partners on the NCA&T and UNCG project.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	Child care rules in NC are set by the NC Child Care Commission. This group is comprised of members appointed by the NC House, Senate and Governor's Office.	The Child Care Commission ensures that a broad representation of providers, parents and community stakeholders are involved in rule-making for the child care community.

1.5.2. Does the State/Territory have a formal early childhood and/or school-age coordination plan? Lead Agencies are not required to have an

early childhood nor a school-age coordination plan, but the State/Territory may have such plans for other purposes, including fulfilling requirements of other programs.

- Yes. If yes,
- a) Provide the name of the entity responsible for the coordination plan(s): the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council
 - b) Describe the age groups addressed by the plan(s): Birth to five
 - c) Indicate whether this entity also operates as the State Advisory Council (as authorized under the Head Start Act of 2007):
 - Yes
 - No
 - d) Provide a web address for the plan(s), if available:
http://www.governor.state.nc.us/library/pdf/NC_ECAC_StrategicReport2010.pdf
- No

1.5.3. Does the State/Territory have a designated entity(ies) responsible for coordination across early childhood and school-age programs? (658D(b)(1)(D), §98.14(a)(1)) Check which entity(ies), if any, the State/Territory has chosen to designate.

- State/Territory-wide early childhood and/or school-age cabinet/advisory council/task force/commission.
If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency _____
- State Advisory Council (as described under the Head Start Act of 2007).
If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency _____
- Local Coordination/Council
If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency _____
- Other.
Describe _____
- None

1.5.4. Does the Lead Agency conduct or plan to conduct activities to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private sector involvement in meeting child care needs? (§98.16(d))

Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the tangible results expected from the public-private partnership

Smart Start is the NC public-private partnership that serves as a convener for early childhood programs. Smart Start local partnerships serve as a system to convene stakeholders to assess local needs; ensure accountability; and leverage private dollars, community, state and federal resources. Local partnerships have

established community networks that bridge education, health services, and family supports to best meet the needs of young children and their families.

No.

1.6. Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

It is recommended, but not required, that each Lead Agency develop a plan to address preparedness, response, and recovery efforts specific to child care services and programs. Plans should cover the following areas: 1) planning for continuation of services to CCDF families; 2) coordination with other State/Territory agencies and key partners; 3) emergency preparedness regulatory requirements for child care providers; 4) provision of temporary child care services after a disaster; and 5) rebuilding child care after a disaster. For further guidance on developing Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans see the Information Memorandum (CCDF-ACF-IM-2011-XX) located on the Office of Child Care website at:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/state_topic_emergency.htm

1.6.1. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of your efforts in this area. Check only ONE.

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated and how the plan will be coordinated with other emergency planning efforts within the State/Territory.
- Developed.** An annually [updated] plan has been developed as of **December 2010** and put into operation as of **December 2010**. Provide a web address for this plan, if available: N/A
- Other. Describe:** _____

1.6.2. Indicate which of the core elements identified in the Information Memorandum are or will be covered in the Lead Agency child care emergency preparedness and response plan. Check which elements, if any, the Lead Agency includes in the plan.

- Planning for continuation of services to CCDF families
- Coordination with other State/Territory agencies and key partners
- Emergency preparedness regulatory requirements for child care providers
- Provision of temporary child care services after a disaster
- Rebuilding child care facilities and infrastructure after a disaster
- None

PART 2

CCDF SUBSIDY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

This section focuses on the child care assistance program. Lead Agencies are asked to describe their efforts to inform parents about the CCDF subsidy program and application policies and procedures, eligibility criteria, how Lead Agencies ensure continuity of care and parental choice of high quality settings for families, and sliding fee scale and payment rate policies and procedures.

2.1. Administration of the Program

The Lead Agency has broad authority to administer (i.e., establish rules) and operate (i.e., implement activities) the CCDF program through other governmental, non-governmental, or other public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program. (658D(b), §98.11(a))

2.1.1. Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are set or established at the State/Territory versus the local level? Identify the level at which the following CCDF program rules and policies are established.

- Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:
 - State/Territory
 - Local entity. If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity _____
 - Other. Describe: _____
- Sliding fee scale is set by the:
 - State/Territory
 - Local entity. If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity _____
 - Other. Describe: _____
- Payment rates are set by the:
 - State/Territory
 - Local entity. If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity _____

Other. Describe: _____

2.1.2. How is the CCDF program operated in your State/Territory? In the table below, identify which agency(ies) performs these CCDF services and activities.

Implementation of CCDF Services/Activities	Agency (Check all that apply)
<p>Who determines eligibility?</p> <p>Note: If different for families receiving TANF benefits and families not receiving TANF benefits, please describe: _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CCDF Lead Agency <input type="checkbox"/> TANF agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments <input type="checkbox"/> Child care resource and referral agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe. _____</p>
<p>Who assists parents in locating child care (consumer education)?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CCDF Lead Agency <input type="checkbox"/> TANF agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child care resource and referral agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe. _____</p>
<p>Who issues payments?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CCDF Lead Agency <input type="checkbox"/> TANF agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments <input type="checkbox"/> Child care resource and referral agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe. _____</p>
<p>Other. List and describe: _____</p>	

2.2. Family Outreach and Application Process

Lead Agencies must inform parents of eligible children and the general public of the process by which they can apply for and potentially receive child care services. (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a)-(e). **Note** - For any information in questions 2.2.1 through 2.2.10 that differs or will differ for families receiving TANF, please describe in 2.2.11.

2.2.1. By whom and how are parents informed of the availability of child care assistance services under CCDF? (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.30(a))
Check all agencies and strategies that will be used in your State/Territory.

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF offices
- Other government offices
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Contractors
- Community-based organizations
- Public schools
- Internet (provide website): www.ncchildcare.net
- Promotional materials
- Community outreach meetings, workshops or other in-person meetings
- Radio and/or television
- Print media
- Other. Describe: Local Smart Start partnerships, early childhood educators and Head Start Programs.

2.2.2. How can parents apply for CCDF services? Check all application methods that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- In person interview or orientation
- By mail
- By Phone/Fax
- Through the Internet (provide website) ____
- By Email
- Other. Describe: ____

2.2.3. Describe how the Lead Agency provides consumer education to parents applying for CCDF assistance to promote informed choices about the quality of care provided by various providers.

Lead Agencies must certify that the State/Territory will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices (658E (c)(2)(G), §98.33).

For example, memorandums of understanding with resource and referral agencies to provide consumer education to families applying for CCDF assistance, providing parents with provider lists showing licensing history and/or Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) ratings, or informational brochures that address importance of quality and different care options available.

The Division of Child Development strives to make parents and other customers aware of early care and education information and resources. The Division collects and disseminates to parents of eligible children and the general public consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. DCD's current activities include: Continued support of CCR&R Core Services provides resource and referral to parents and technical assistance and training to early care and education providers throughout North Carolina.

Local purchasing agencies assist parents when they need help with the provider selection process. During the initial interview, the child care worker helps the family to plan for child care, to understand what to look for when choosing an arrangement, and to deal with the emotional effects of separating from the child. Parents can visit the Division of Child Development's website at www.ncchildcare.net to search for regulated providers. Information such as the provider's location, and star level are available online.

2.2.4. Describe how the Lead Agency will support child care programs to increase the likelihood that CCDF-served children receive higher quality care as defined in your State/Territory. For example, methods used to promote upward movement in quality rating and improvement system, methods used to encourage high quality programs to participate in the subsidy program such as tiered reimbursement, or incentives used to support high quality programs in rural, suburban, urban, and low-income communities.

North Carolina has a five-star rated license system for child care facilities based upon levels of program standards and staff education. Market rates have been established for each star level of the rated license so that as providers increase their star rating they have the opportunity to receive a higher subsidy payment rate.

2.2.5. How will the Lead Agency promote access to the CCDF subsidy program? Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory.

- Increase access to program office/workers such as by:
 - Extending office hours
 - Accepting applications at multiple office locations
 - Providing a toll-free number for clients
 - Other. Describe: _____
- Simplify eligibility determination process such as by:
 - Simplifying the application form
 - Developing a single application for multiple programs
 - Developing web-based and/or phone-based application procedures
 - Coordinating eligibility policies across programs. List the program names Food and Nutrition Services
 - Streamlining verification procedures, such as linking to other program data systems
 - Providing information multi-lingually
 - Including temporary periods of unemployment in eligibility criteria for new applicants (job search, seasonal unemployment). Lengths of time Active Work First participants are provided child care assistance for job search for as long as the activity is included in the Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA).

Other. Describe: Families who receive benefits through the Food and Nutrition Services Program automatically are deemed income eligible for subsidized child care services. Child care staff in local purchasing agencies access family demographics and income information from the Food Stamp Information System (FSIS).
Work Support Strategies Grant: DCD has been working in collaboration with other means tested benefits and services programs such as (1) Food and Nutrition Services (2) Work First (3) Medicaid, and (4) Special Assistance to collect income information through the Integrated Eligibility project. The purpose is to 1) standardize the types of income collected at initial intake, and 2) align how different income types are treated. These goals will promote consistency and streamline eligibility processes.

- Other. Describe: ____
 None

2.2.6. Describe the Lead Agencies policies to promote continuity of care for children and stability for families. Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- Provide CCDF assistance during periods of job search. Length of time 30 – 60 days
- Establish two-tiered income eligibility with a higher exit point than entry point to cover temporary changes in family's circumstances
- Synchronize review date across programs
- Longer eligibility re-determination periods (e.g., 1 year). Describe An annual redetermination is required for every case. However, a six (6) month review is required for cases of families receiving assistance for developmental needs, Child Welfare Services and Child Protective Services. Cases of parents receiving assistance for education must be reviewed at the end of each semester. The local purchasing agency may choose to conduct more frequent reviews, such as quarterly reviews.
- Extend periods of eligibility for families who are also enrolled in either Early Head Start or Head Start and pre-k programs. Describe ____
- Minimize reporting requirements for changes in eligibility criteria, such as changes in income above a certain threshold or change in employment
- Targeted case management to help families find and keep stable child care arrangements
- Using non-CCDF Funds to continue subsidy for families who no longer meet eligibility, such as for children who turn 13 years of age during the middle of a program year
- Other. Describe Families who meet income eligibility and have a need for care for children age 13 through 17 such as children who have special needs or circumstances; children under court-ordered

supervision; children receiving child protective services or foster care services; or children who would be left in an unsafe situation if care were not provided.

None

2.2.7. How will the Lead Agency reach out and provide services to eligible families with limited English proficiency? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- Application in other languages
- Informational materials in non-English languages
- Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
- Website in non-English languages
- Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- Other: _____
- None

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

- Informational materials in non-English languages
- Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
- CCDF health and safety requirements in non-English languages
- Provider contracts or agreements in non-English languages
- Website in non-English languages
- Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- Other: _____
- None

2.2.9. Describe how the Lead Agency documents and verifies applicant information using the table below. (§98.20(a)) Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory. **Attach** a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program(s) as **Attachment 2.2.9** or provide a web address, if available

<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dcd/ccs/man/DCD-0456.pdf>

The Lead Agency requires documentation of:	Describe how the Lead Agency documents and verifies applicant information:
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant identity	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Household composition	<u>The applicant's statement of family size is acceptable unless there is some reason to suspect that the statement is not correct. Family size can be verified by birth certificates, baptismal certificates, and contacts with schools or other objective sources of verification is necessary. Family size is documented on the Child Care Application.</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant's	The applicant's statement of the relationship to the child is

relationship to the child	<u>acceptable and documented on the Child Care Application.</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child's information	<u>The child's name, age, sex, race and ethnicity are provided by the parent/responsible adult and documented on the Child Care Application.</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work, Job Training or Educational Program	<u>Work is verified by pay stubs, employer verification forms, award letters and current information from existing agency records and documented in the case record. Job training or educational program is documented by school schedules, proof of enrollment, grades and attendance and documented in the case record.</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income	<u>The amount of gross family income is verified by pay stubs, employer verification forms, award letters, current information from existing agency records and other source documents and documented in the case record.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe	

2.2.10. Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to assure the timeliness of eligibility determinations upon receipt of applications?

- Policy on length of time for making eligibility determinations. Describe length of time The applicant must be notified of any eligibility decision within 30 calendar days after the date of application.
- Track and monitor the eligibility determination process
- Other. Describe If eligibility requirements are not met within 30 days, the parent is issued a copy of the application which serves as notice of the eligibility decision.
- None

2.2.11. Are the policies, strategies or processes provided in questions 2.1.1. through 2.1.10 different for families receiving TANF?

(658E(c)(2)(H) & (3)(D), §§98.16(g)(4), 98.33(b), 98.50(e))

- Yes. If yes, describe: ____
- No.

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

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age. Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure, pursuant that TANF families with young children will be informed of their right not to be sanctioned if they meet the criteria set forth by the State TANF agency in accordance with section 407(e)(2) of the Social Security Act.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care. **NOTE:** The TANF agency, not the CCDF Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record.

- a) Identify the TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions:
State/Territory TANF Agency local departments of social services
- b) Provide the following definitions established by the TANF agency.
 - "appropriate child care": care in a regulated child care center or family child care home that has a license, or care in an unregulated child care arrangement that meets the minimal health, safety or criminal record check standards required of unregulated providers for payment through North Carolina's child care subsidy program.
 - "reasonable distance": In evaluating "reasonable distance," counties or local agencies consider the total time it takes for parents to travel one-way from home to the child care provider, then to work or work-related activity. Because of differences in North Carolina's geography and highway/road systems, county departments of social services or local purchasing agencies have maximum discretion to decide what is "reasonable" for individuals based on their resources (i.e. whether they have a vehicle in working order or family resources available for transporting the family) and local transportation considerations.

As a guideline, counties or local purchasing agencies should consider that it may not be reasonable to require families receiving Work First to travel more than eighty minutes one-way to work and child care. Eighty minutes is approximately 4 times the average one-way commute time in North Carolina (not including stops at child care arrangements), as reported by the US Census Bureau based on the 2000 decennial census. This does not preclude exemption from the sanction based on a shorter commute if the local purchasing agency considers the commute an obstacle to children's healthy development or the family's self-sufficiency goals.

- "unsuitability of informal child care": unregulated child care arrangements that do not meet the health, safety, and criminal record check standards required of unregulated providers necessary to receive subsidy payments from the State of North Carolina; or
the parent does not want his/her child (ren) cared for by the unregulated child care provider.

- "affordable child care arrangements": Families receiving subsidies pay 10% of their countable income as a parental fee. This fee percentage makes care affordable to families regardless of the market rate or private pay rate paid to the provider. This fee percentage allows families receiving subsidies to enroll their children in higher quality care without reduced cost, thereby making care affordable.

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

- In writing
- Verbally
- Other: Form DSS-8221 – What Happens If You Can't Meet Your Work Requirements Because Appropriate Child Care Is Not Available?

2.3. Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

In order to be eligible for services, children must (1) be under the age of 13, or under the age of 19 if the child is physically or mentally disabled or under court supervision; (2) reside with a family whose income is less than 85 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size; and (3) reside with a parent or parents who is working or attending job training or an educational program; or (4) be receiving or needs to receive protective services. (658P(3), §98.20(a))

2.3.1. How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

- residing with – biological or adoptive parent(s) with whom the child lives and has primary responsibility for the care and well being of the child
- in loco parentis – responsible adult who is responsible for the care of the child, but is not financially obligated, such as a step-parent or grandparent

2.3.2. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Age

a) The Lead Agency serves children from birth weeks to 13 years (maximum age under age 13).

b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

- Yes, and the upper age is through age 17. Provide the Lead Agency definition of *physical or mental incapacity* – An

“incapacity,” as determined by a medical professional, which supports the need for supervision or involvement in child care

No.

c) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is 17

No.

2.3.3. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Work, Job Training or Educational Program

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

Reminder – Lead Agencies have the flexibility to include any work-related activities in its definition of working, including periods of job search and travel time. (§§98.16(f)(3), 98.20(b))

- working – being engaged in an activity on a regular basis which provides earned income. (This activity may also include a period in which the parent is seeking employment.) Child Care is approved to support full and part-time employment. Full time employment is considered an average of 30 hours or more per week. Some activities that are considered “working” include self-employment, parents participating in the Work First Program, and employment performed outside the home.

b) Does the Lead Agency provide CCDF child care assistance to parents who are attending job training or an educational program? (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

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

Reminder – Lead Agencies have the flexibility to include any training or education-related activities in its definition of job training or education, including study time and travel time.

- attending job training or educational program – “making satisfactory progress in a job training or educational activity approved by the local purchasing agencies.” This may include (a) education leading to a high school diploma or its equivalent, and (b) post-secondary education or skills training. There is no minimum number of hours that child

care assistance can be provided to support families engaged in job training or educational programs. However, services are available to support this post-secondary education and skills training.

No.

2.3.4. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

a) Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

Yes. If yes, how does the Lead Agency define “protective services” for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a narrative description below.

Reminder – Lead Agencies have the flexibility to define protective services beyond formal child welfare or foster care cases. Lead Agencies may elect to include homeless children and other vulnerable populations in the definition of protective services.

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

- protective services – Child care can be provided to support child protective services which are provided by the county department of social services for the purpose of investigating a report of child abuse or neglect. Child protective services may also be provided if a report is substantiated as part of a treatment plan or if a family assessment indicates services are needed to prevent placement into foster care.

No.

b) Does the Lead Agency waive, on a case-by-case basis, the co-payment and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

Yes.

No. We do not use CCDF Funds for CPS, and we do not have co-payments.

2.3.5. Income Eligibility Criteria

a) How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Provide the Lead Agency’s definition of “income” for purposes of eligibility determination. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

- income – monetary resources, earned or unearned, received for labor, services, government or private benefits, or any money available to members of the income unit for their maintenance.

b) Which of the following sources of income, if any, will the Lead Agency exclude from calculations of total family income for the purposes of eligibility determination? Check any income the Lead Agency chooses to exclude, if any.

- Adoption subsidies
- Foster care payments
- Alimony received or paid
- Child support received
- Child support paid
- Federal nutrition programs
- Federal and/or State/Territory tax credits
- Housing allotments, Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or energy assistance
- Medical expenses or health insurance related expenses
- Military housing or other allotment/bonuses
- Scholarships, education loans, grants, income from work study
- Social Security Income
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veteran’s benefits
- Unemployment Insurance
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Worker Compensation
- Other types of income not listed above lump sum payments, payments/trust funds under the Indian Claims Commission, payments from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, income from the sale of personal assets, bank withdrawals, money borrowed, tax refunds, non-recurring gifts, contributions or other in-kind contributions from non-legally responsible adults, capital gains, Relocation/Acquisition Act payments, earnings of a dependent child under 18 years of age, home produce utilized for household consumption, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) earnings and employee benefits for child care.
- None

c) Whose income will be excluded, if any, for purposes of eligibility determination? Check anyone the Lead Agency chooses to exclude, if any.

- Children under age 18
- Children age 18 and over – still attending school
- Teen parents living with parents
- Unrelated members of household
- All members of household except for parents/legal guardians
- Other
- None

d) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below.

Complete columns (a) and (b) based upon maximum eligibility initial entry into the CCDF program. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			Income Level if lower than 85% SMI	
			(c) \$/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	\$2,578	\$2,191	\$1,933	75%
2	\$3,371	\$2,865	\$2,528	75%
3	\$4,164	\$3,539	\$3,123	75%
4	\$4,957	\$4,214	\$3,718	75%
5	\$5,750	\$4,888	\$4,312	75%

Reminder - Income limits must be provided in terms of State Median Income (SMI) (or Territory Median Income) even if federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. (§98.20(a)(2)). FY 2011 poverty guidelines are available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11poverty.shtml>.

e) Will the Lead Agency have “tiered eligibility” (i.e., a separate income limit at re-determination to remain eligible for the CCDF program)?

- Yes. If yes, **provide** the requested information from the table in 2.3.5d and **describe** _____.

Note: This information can be included in a separate table, or by placing a “/” between the entry and exit levels in the above table.

- No.

f) SMI Year 2009 and SMI Source 2008

g) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on: August 1, 2009

2.3.6. Eligibility Re-determination

a) What is the re-determination period upon initial authorization of CCDF services for most families?

- 6 months
- 12 months
- 24 months
- Other. Describe _____
- Length of eligibility varies by county or other jurisdiction. Describe _____

b) Is the re-determination period the same for all CCDF eligible families?

- Yes.
- No. If no, **identify** those families where eligibility authorizations differ and the length of re-determination for those families. **Check which families for whom authorizations are different.**
 - Families enrolled in Head Start and/or Early Head Start Programs. Re-determination period _____
 - Families enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs. Re-determination period _____
 - Families receiving TANF. Re-determination period _____
 - Families who are very-low income, but not receiving TANF. Re-determination period _____
 - Other. Describe _____

2.3.7. Waiting Lists

Describe the Lead Agency's waiting list status. Select **ONE** of these options.

- Lead Agency currently does not have a waiting list and:
 - All eligible families *who apply* will be served under State/Territory eligibility rules
 - Not all eligible families *who apply* will be served under State/Territory eligibility rules
- Lead Agency has an active waiting list for:
 - Any eligible family who applies when they cannot be served at the time of application
 - Only certain eligible families. Describe those families:
- Other. Describe

2.3.8. Appeal Process for Eligibility Determinations

Describe the process for families to appeal eligibility determinations

All applicants and recipients have a right to request and obtain a fair hearing if they disagree with eligibility determinations. The hearing will establish whether the action was correct and will provide benefits if it was wrong. Applicants or recipients wishing to request a fair hearing must contact the local purchasing agency within sixty (60) calendar days after the effective date of the action taken. The hearing can be requested either orally or in writing. The hearing will be scheduled with an official of the local purchasing agency.

The hearing will be held within five (5) calendar days of each request unless the applicant or recipient postpones it for good reasons. If the hearing is postponed for good cause, the hearing may be delayed up to ten (10) additional calendar days. If the applicant or recipient is dissatisfied with the decision made at the local hearing, they can request a second hearing with an impartial official from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

2.4. Sliding Fee Scale and Family Contribution

The statute and regulations require Lead Agencies to establish a sliding fee scale that varies based on income and the size of the family to be used in determining each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) to the cost of child care (658E(c)(3)(B) §98.42).

2.4.1. Attach a copy of the sliding fee scale as Attachment 2.4.1. The attached sliding fee scale was or will be effective as of: August 1, 2009
Attach income chart w/fee percentages

2.4.2. Will the attached sliding fee scale provided as Attachment 2.4.1. be used in all parts of the State/Territory?

- Yes
 No. If no, attach other sliding fee scales and their effective date(s) as **Attachment 2.4.2a, 2.4.2b**, etc.

2.4.3. What income source and year will be used in creating the sliding fee scale? (658E(c)(3)(B)) Check only one option.

- State Median Income, Year: 2009
 Federal Poverty Level, Year: _____
 Income source and year varies by geographic region. Describe income source and year: _____
 Other. Describe income source and year:

2.4.4. How will the family's contribution be calculated and to whom will it be applied? Check all that the Lead Agency has chosen to use. (§98.42(b))

- Fee as dollar amount and

- Fee is per child with the same fee for each child
- Fee is per child and discounted fee for two or more children
- No additional fee charged after certain number of children
- Fee per family
- Fee as percent of income and
 - Fee is per child with the same fee for each child
 - Fee is per child and discounted fee for two or more children
 - No additional fee charged after certain number of children
 - Fee per family
- Contribution schedule varies by geographic area
- Other. Describe _____

If the Lead Agency checked more than one of the options above, describe _____

2.4.5. Will the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

- Yes, and describe those additional factors: The hours that care is needed is an additional factor used when determining each family's contribution to the cost of care.
- No.

2.4.6. The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size. (§98.42(c)). Select ONE of these options.

Reminder – Lead Agencies are reminded that the co-payments may be waived for only two circumstances - for families at or below the poverty level or on a case-by-case basis for children falling under the definition of “protective services” (as defined in 2.3.4.a).

- ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.
- NO families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE required to pay a fee. The poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: \$_____
- SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required paying a fee. The Lead Agency waives the fee for the following families: Fees are not assessed to families whose only source of income is “not countable” (as defined in child care subsidy policy). In addition, fees are not charged for children with no income who live with someone other than a biological or adoptive parent, or with someone who does not have court-ordered financial responsibility.

2.5. Prioritizing Services for Eligible Children and Families

At a minimum, CCDF requires Lead Agencies to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, or in families with very low incomes. Prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., establishment of a waiting list or ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served). Lead Agencies may fulfill priority requirements in other ways such as higher payment rates for providers caring for children with special needs or waiving co-payments for families with very low incomes (at or below the federal poverty level). (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.44)

2.5.1. How will the Lead Agency prioritize child care services to children with special needs or in families with very low incomes?

(658E(c)(3)(B), §98.44) Lead Agencies have the discretion to define *children with special needs* and *children in families with very low incomes*. Lead Agencies are not limited in defining *children with special needs* to only those children with physical or mental disabilities (e.g., with a formal Individual Education Plan (IEP) required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)). Lead Agencies could consider children in the child welfare system, children of teen parents, or homeless children as examples of *children with special needs*.

How will the Lead Agency prioritize CCDF services for:	Eligibility Priority (Check only one)	Is there a time limit on the eligibility priority or guarantee?	Other Priority Rules
Children with special needs Provide the Lead Agency definition of <i>Children with Special Needs</i> <u>Children who have developmental delays, an established condition, or development that is atypical</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Priority over other CCDF-eligible families <input type="checkbox"/> Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families <input type="checkbox"/> Guaranteed subsidy eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes. The time limit is: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Different eligibility thresholds. Describe _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Higher rates for providers caring for children with special needs requiring additional care <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritizes quality funds for providers serving these children <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>The amount set aside for each state fiscal year must be at least as much as they spent in SFY 1996-1997 to serve children with special needs. Counties may choose to set aside a higher amount.</u>

How will the Lead Agency prioritize CCDF services for:	Eligibility Priority (Check only one)	Is there a time limit on the eligibility priority or guarantee?	Other Priority Rules
Children in families with very low incomes Provide the Lead Agency definition of <i>Children in Families with Very Low Incomes</i> <u>Children whose income is less than 75% of the state median income</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Priority over other CCDF-eligible families <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families <input type="checkbox"/> Guaranteed subsidy eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes. The time limit is: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Different eligibility thresholds. Describe _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Waiving co-payments for families with incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Level <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe _____

2.5.2. How will CCDF funds be used to provide child care assistance to meet the needs of families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF? (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

Reminder - CCDF requires that not less than 70 percent of CCDF Mandatory and Matching funds be used to provide child care assistance for families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF.

- Use priority rules to meet the needs of TANF families
- Waive fees (co-payments) for some or all TANF families who are below poverty level
- Coordinate with other entities (i.e. TANF office, other State/Territory agencies, and contractors)
- Other: During the 2010-2011 SFY, the North Carolina General Assembly approved the transfer of \$84.3 million from TANF to CCDF and \$61 million in direct TANF funds to be spent for child care subsidies. These funds are part of the allocation of blended funding that local purchasing agencies receive for subsidy services. Most local purchasing agencies give priority to families who are working, including those who are receiving TANF benefits, when there are not enough funds to serve all families. Local purchasing agencies develop local plans for meeting TANF goals which include projections about the

number of families and children who need child care to support the parent's employment.

Some counties have chosen to use funding from local Work First Block Grant funds to provide child care services for TANF-eligible families when county child care allocations have been insufficient to meet the needs of families.

Families that transition off TANF through work activities continue to receive child care services as long as the need and income criteria for services are met. Those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF can receive services as long as the need and income criteria are met, and as long as funding is available.

2.5.3. List and define any other eligibility conditions, priority rules and definitions that will be established by the Lead Agency.

(658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b)) **Reminder** – Lead Agencies are reminded that any eligibility criteria and terms provided below must comply with the eligibility requirements of §98.20 and provided in section 2.2. Any priority rules provided must comply with the priority requirements of §98.44 and provided in section 2.4.1.

Term(s)	Definition(s)
N/A	

2.6. Parental Choice In Relation to Certificates, Grants or Contracts

The parent(s) of each eligible child who receives or is offered financial assistance for child care services has the option of either enrolling such child with a provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of service or receiving a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(a))

2.6.1. Child Care Certificates

a) When is the child care certificate (also referred to as voucher or authorization) issued to parents? (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), §98.2, §98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2))

- Before parent has selected a provider
- After parent has selected a provider
- Other. Describe ____

b) How does the Lead Agency inform parents that the child care certificate permits them to choose from a variety of child care categories, including child care centers, child care group homes, family child care homes, and in-home providers? (§98.30(e)(2))

- Certificate form provides information about choice of providers
- Certificate is not linked to a specific provider so parents can choose provider of choice
- Consumer education materials (flyers, forms, brochures)

- Referral to child care resource and referral agencies
- Verbal communication at the time of application
- Public Services Announcement
- Agency Website: www.ncchildcare.net
- Community outreach meetings, workshops, other in person activities
- Multiple points of communication throughout the eligibility and renew process
- Other. Describe Local Smart Start partnerships, public schools, early childhood educators, and Head Start programs may also offer information to parents about the availability of subsidized child care services.

c) What information is included on the child care certificate? **Attach a copy of the child care certificate as Attachment 2.6.1.**
(658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))

- Authorized provider(s)
- Authorized payment rate(s)
- Authorized hours
- Co-payment amount
- Authorization period
- Other. Describe North Carolina uses a child care voucher system to provide child care services to families. The voucher includes the identifying information of the family including the family and child's name, date of birth, race, ethnicity, language preference, eligibility period, parental fee, plan of care, etc. It also provides information regarding the appeals and hearing processes. Signatures from the parent, early care and education provider and child care social worker are required on the voucher. The voucher serves as verification to an early care and education provider that the child is eligible for subsidized child care funding.

d) What is the estimated proportion of services that will be available for child care services through certificates? 100%

2.6.2. Child Care Services Available through Grants or Contracts

a) In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency provide child care services through grants or contracts for child care slots? (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b)). **Note:** Do not check "yes" if every provider is simply required to sign an agreement in order to be paid in the certificate program.

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

No.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to achieve any of the following? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory chooses to implement.

- Increase the supply of specific types of care
 - Programs to serve children with special needs
 - Wrap-around or integrated child care in Head Start, Early Head Start, pre-k, summer or other programs
 - Programs to serve infant/toddler
 - School-age programs
 - Center-based providers
 - Family child care providers
 - Group-home providers
 - Programs that serve specific geographic areas
 - Urban
 - Rural
 - Other. Describe N/A
- Support programs in providing higher quality services
- Support programs in providing comprehensive services
- Serve underserved families. Specify: _____
- Other. Describe

c) Are child care services provided through grants or contracts offered throughout the State/Territory? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

- Yes.
- No, and **identify** the localities (political subdivisions) and services that are not offered: N/A

d) How are payment rates for child care services provided through grants/contracts determined? N/A

e) What is the estimated proportion of direct services that will be available for child care services through grants/contracts? N/A

2.6.3. How will the Lead Agency inform parents and providers of policies and procedures for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds? (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31)) Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory.

- Signed declaration
- Parent Application
- Parent Orientation
- Provider Agreement
- Provider Orientation

Other. Describe: North Carolina child care requirement 10A NCAC 09.0205 and .1701(g) requires the parent, guardian or full- time custodian of a child enrolled in any child care facility be allowed unlimited access to the child during its operating hours for the purpose of contacting the child or evaluating the center and the care provided by the center.

2.6.4. The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care (i.e., care provided in the child's own home) but may limit its use. (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv)) Will the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

No

Yes. If checked, what limits will the Lead Agency set on the use of in-home care? Check all limits the Lead Agency will establish.

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

Restricted based on provider meeting a minimum age requirement

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

Restricted to care by relatives

Restricted to care for children with special needs or medical condition

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

Other. Describe ____

2.6.5. Describe how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints about providers and makes substantiated parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32)

Complaint reports alleging violations of licensing requirements in regulated programs are investigated by licensing staff from the Division of Child Development. Staff jointly investigates reports which allege child abuse and/or neglect in child care settings with county departments of social services. If a report of abuse or neglect is received and the early care and education provider is non-licensed, or if the educator is a relative of the child, the county department of social services conducts the investigation. Certain documents regarding investigative findings are considered public information and are available at the Division of Child Development headquarters in Raleigh, and on the Division's website.

In addition to information on complaints that are investigated and described above, parents may gain access to information on any early care and education provider's compliance with licensing requirements. Files are maintained in the Division of Child Development's office on each regulated center and home. Parents may view the records by visiting the office, or they may request a copy via e-mail or phone (1-800-859-0829)

for in-state calls or 919-662-4527). Parents can also access some information from on-line records available through the Division of Child Development's web site (This portion of website is also available in Spanish.)

2.7. Payment Rates for Child Care Services

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish adequate payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

2.7.1. Provide a copy of your payment rates as Attachment 2.7.1. The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of: October 1, 2009.

2.7.2. Are the attached payment rates provided in Attachment 2.7.1 used in all parts of the State/Territory?

- Yes.
 No. If no, attach other payment rates and their effective date(s) as **Attachment 2.7.2a, 2.7.2b**, etc.

2.7.3. Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to ensure the timeliness of payments?

- Policy on length of time for making payments. Describe length of time Beginning October 1, 2011, payments will be made the middle and end of month.
 Track and monitor the payment process
 Other direct deposit to the providers' designated banking account
None

2.7.4. Market Rate Survey

Lead Agencies must complete a local Market Rate Survey (MRS) no earlier than two years prior to the effective date of the Plan (no earlier than October 1, 2009). The MRS must be completed prior to the submission of the CCDF Plan (see Program Instruction CCDF-ACF-PI-2009-02 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/guidance/current/pi2009-02/pi2009-02.htm> for more information on the MRS deadline).

a) Provide the month and year when the local Market Rate Survey(s) was completed (§98.43(b)(2)): June 2011.

b) Attach a copy of the **MRS instrument** and a **summary of the results** of the survey as **Attachment 2.7.4**. For Lead Agencies that use an administrative provider database, provide a copy of the intake form as the instrument. The summary should include a description of the sample

population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings.

2.7.5. Will the Lead Agency use the local Market Rate Survey identified in 2.7.4a (i.e., the most recent MRS) to set its payment rates?

- Yes
 No

If no, list the MRS year that the payment rate ceiling is based upon Rates were last adjusted based on the 2007 Market Rate Survey results. At the time of this writing, adjustments to current market rates have not been proposed.

2.7.6. At what percentile of the most recent local MRS are or will payment rates be set? Provide the percentile for your payment rate ceiling in relation to the most recent survey and Describe

This varies by county, type of care, and age and star rate category. The most recent market rate adjustments have been partial increases of recommended adjustments. Across all counties, across all rates for centers and homes by age and star levels, the current market rates will purchase care at the 75th percentile of private rates an average of 31% of the time.

Note: Identify the percentile where payment rates fall according to the most recent local MRS (identified in 2.6.4a) regardless of whether or not you use the most recent survey to set rates. If the percentile(s) varies across categories of care (e.g., different for centers and family child care homes), regions or ages of children, provide the range of the highest and lowest percentile in relation to the most recent survey.

2.7.7. Will the Lead Agency provide any type of tiered reimbursement or differential rates on top of its base reimbursement rates for providing care for children receiving CCDF subsidies? Check which types of tiered reimbursement, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement.

- Differential rate for nontraditional hours. Describe _____
 Differential rate for children with special needs as defined by the State/Territory. Describe _____
 Differential rate for infants and toddlers. Describe _____
 Differential rate for school-age programs. Describe _____
 Differential rate for higher quality as defined by the State/Territory. Describe Differential rate based on star level.
 Other differential rate. Describe ____
 None.

2.7.8. Will the Lead Agency allow providers to charge parents any additional fees? Check the policies, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to establish regarding additional fees.

- Providers are allowed to charge the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate
- Providers are allowed to charge registration fees
- Providers are allowed to charge for transportation fees
- Providers are allowed to charge for meals.
- Providers are allowed to charge additional incidental fees such as field trips or supplies
- Policies vary across region, counties and or geographic areas. Describe
- No, providers may not charge parents any additional fees
- Other. Describe The Lead Agency does not pay for transportation and registration fees
- None

2.7.9. Describe how payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full range of providers based on the Market Rate Survey.

CCDF regulations require the Lead Agency to certify that the payment rates for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services comparable to those provided to families not eligible to receive CCDF assistance. To demonstrate equal access, the Lead Agency shall provide at a minimum a summary of facts describing: (§98.43(a))

- a) How a choice of the full range of providers, e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, group child care homes and in-home care, is made available (§98.43(a)(1))
Separate payment rates for subsidized child care are established for child care centers, family child care homes, and in-home care. Subsidized child care reimbursement rates are further delineated by county, age group, and star level based on rates reported by providers to be charged for each of these categories of care. This allows for a wide range of centers and homes of different licensing levels to be available to parents.
- b) How payment rates are adequate based on the most recent local MRS (§98.43(a)(2))
Although market rates have not been adjusted recently, 84% of the licensed child care centers and family child care homes currently report that they will participate in the subsidized child care program. This percentage is the same as reported in 2009.
- c) How family co-payments based on a sliding fee scale are affordable (§98.43(a)(3))
Family co-payments do not exceed 10% of a family's gross monthly income.

d) Any additional facts the Lead Agency considered that determine that its payment rates ensure equal access

In the 2011 market rate survey, providers that did not participate in the subsidized child care program were asked if they chose not to participate because the market rate was lower than the rate they charged private-paying parents. Only 18% of centers and 16% of family child care homes statewide reported they did not participate for this reason.

2.7.10 Goals for the next Biennium – What are the Lead Agency’s goals for the administration of the CCDF subsidy program in the coming Biennium? For example, what progress does the State/Territory expect to make on continuing improved services to parents and providers, continuity of care for children, improving outreach to parents and providers, building or expanding information technology systems, or revising rate setting policies or practices) _____

Subsidized Early Education for Kids (SEEK)

North Carolina will be implementing a new electronic attendance reporting and payment delivery system for the Subsidized Child Care Program. The new system is called Subsidized Early Education for Kids (SEEK). Training regarding SEEK will be provided to county staff, child care providers and parents.

SEEK will be implemented in two phases. Phase I will be Time and Attendance. During this phase Point of Service (POS) machines will be installed in child care facilities. Magnetic stripe cards will be issued to parents receiving subsidized child care assistance. These cards will be used by parents to check children in and out of child care facilities.

Phase II will be Payment Calculation and Delivery. This phase will involve transitioning payment responsibilities from counties to the state level. Child care provider payments will be calculated automatically by SEEK and distributed by direct deposit from the State’s bank twice per month. County staff will no longer enter attendance information into the current Subsidized Child Care Reimbursement System (SCCRS).

The process of planning and design of SEEK has already begun. Both phases are being developed simultaneously. The pilot for Phase I is scheduled to begin in June 2011. The pilot for Phase II is expected to begin in September 2011 and full implementation should be fully implemented in all 100 counties by the end of February 2012.

Work Support Strategies Grant

DCD has been working in collaboration with other means tested benefits and services programs such as (1) Food and Nutrition Services (2) Work First (3) Medicaid, and (4) Special Assistance to collect income information through the Integrated Eligibility project. The purpose is to 1) standardize the types of income collected at initial intake, and 2) align how different income types are

treated. These goals will promote consistency and streamline eligibility processes.

The Integrated Eligibility workgroup in collaboration with PCG consolidated, aligned, reduced and simplified the long list of about 200 income types currently being collected by programs to only 80 income types. Discussions with the various programs revealed that many of these income types were not made based on specific policy-related reasons (i.e. to extend or deny benefits to a certain population) but rather to provide specific guidance in the “gray areas” of income determination and respond to obscure types of income. Income types derived directly from federal regulations were often defined in a different manner and some income types were altogether outdated or no longer considered relevant.

Income alignment reveals the importance of unified policy development as changing countable income types in one program could have an impact on other programs. The need for communication and collaboration among policy groups across programs will continue to be necessary.

The Work Support Strategies (WSS) Grant encourages this process to establish a more definitive governance structure to increase efficiency across programs. In February North Carolina was one of nine states selected to participate in the Work Support Strategies Initiative sponsored by the Ford Foundation. The WSS Initiative has as its purpose to assist states to design, test and implement more effective, streamlined, and integrated approaches to deliver key supports for low-income working families.

Part 3

Health and Safety and Quality Improvement Activities

In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to describe their goals and plans for implementation of child care quality improvement activities. Under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, Lead Agencies have significant responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of children in child care through the State/Territory's child care licensing system and establishing health and safety standards for children who receive CCDF funds. Health and safety is the foundation of quality, but is not adequate to ensure that programs and staff are competent in supporting all areas of child development and promoting school success.

Quality investments and support systems to promote continuous quality improvement of both our programs and the staff who work in them are a core element of CCDF. This section allows Lead Agencies to describe the steps that they are taking toward continuous quality improvement with a goal of having high quality child care options across settings for all families. While one of the key goals for CCDF is helping more low-income children access higher quality care, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to consider its goals and strategic plans for a child care quality improvement system for all families, not just those receiving assistance under CCDF.

Part 3 is organized based on four key components of quality which encompass most of the quality investments and initiatives undertaken by Lead Agencies:

1. Ensuring health and safety of children through **licensing and health and safety standards**
2. Establishing **early learning guidelines**
3. Creating pathways to excellence for child care programs through **program quality improvement activities**
4. Creating pathways to an effective, well-supported child care workforce through **professional development systems and workforce initiatives.**

For each component, Lead Agencies are asked to conduct a three-part process. In this section, Lead Agencies conduct a self-assessment by describing the current status of their efforts, using common practices and best practices to list characteristics. Lead Agencies then are asked to identify goals for making progress during the FY 2012-2013 biennium and describe their data, performance measure and evaluation capacity for each component.

It is expected that the Lead Agency is making systematic investments towards child care quality improvement across its early childhood and school-age spectrum – including all settings, geographic coverage and age range – that will help show progress toward these outcomes and goals. Ultimately, these child care quality improvement elements should be fully implemented and integrated. Until that point, States/Territories are expected to fall on a continuum of progress. Baseline information on status and capacity for these elements and goals for the upcoming two-year period will be captured in this section. Progress on these elements will be reported using the Quality Performance Report in Appendix 1 as the final step.

3.1. Activities to Ensure the Health and Safety of Children in Child Care (Component #1)

This section is intended to collect information on how Lead Agencies meet the statutory and regulatory provisions related to licensing and health and safety requirements. The CCDBG statute and the CCDF regulations address health and safety primarily in two ways.

First, Lead Agencies shall certify that they have in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the area served by the Lead Agency (§98.40(a)(1)). These licensing requirements need not be applied to specific types of providers of child care services (658(E)(c)(2)(E)(i)). Lead Agencies must describe those licensing requirements and how they are effectively enforced. Second, Each Lead Agency shall certify that there are in effect, within the State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF.

The relationship between licensing requirements and health and safety requirements varies by State/Territory depending on how comprehensive the licensing system is. In some States and Territories, licensing may apply to the majority of CCDF-eligible providers and the licensing standards cover the three CCDF health and safety requirements so the State/Territory has few, if any, providers for whom they need to establish additional CCDF health and safety requirements. In other cases, States and Territories have elected to exempt large numbers of providers from licensing which means that those exempted providers who care for children receiving assistance from CCDF will have to meet to the CCDF health and safety requirements through an alternative process outside of licensing. The State/Territory may also elect to impose more stringent standards and licensing or regulatory requirements on child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the CCDF than the standards or requirements imposed on other child care providers. (§98.40(b)(1)) Section 3.1 asks the State/Territory to identify and describe the components of both the licensing and CCDF health and safety requirements, indicate which providers are subject to the requirements, and describe compliance and enforcement activities. (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41)

3.1.1. Compliance with Applicable State/Territory and Local Regulatory Requirements on Licensing

Lead Agencies shall certify that they have in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the area served by the Lead Agency (§98.40(a)(1)). These licensing requirements need not be applied to specific types of providers of child care services (658(E)(c)(2)(E)(i)). Lead Agencies must describe those licensing requirements and how they are effectively enforced.

Definition: Licensing requirements are defined as regulatory requirements, including registration or certification requirements established under State, local, or tribal law, necessary for a provider to legally operate and provide child care services in a State or locality (§98.2). This does not include registration or certification requirements solely for child care providers to be eligible to participate in the CCDF program. Those requirements will be addressed in 3.1.2.

a) Is the Lead Agency responsible for child care licensing? (§98.11(a))

Yes.

No. Please identify the entity/agency responsible for licensing

b) **Provide a brief overview** of the relationship between the licensing requirements and CCDF health and safety requirements in your State/Territory. At a minimum, describe whether the State/Territory's licensing requirements serve as the CCDF health and safety requirements.

North Carolina's child care law and rules serve as the CCDF health and safety requirements. Licensed providers paid with CCDF funds are subject to licensing under the State requirements.

c) CCDF identifies and defines four categories of care: child care centers, family child care homes, group child care homes and in-home child care providers (§98.2). The CCDF definition for each category is listed below. Within each CCDF category of care, please identify which types of providers are exempt from licensing in your State/Territory in the chart below.

CCDF Category of Care	CCDF Definition (§98.2)	Are any providers in your State/Territory which fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing?
Center-Based Child Care	Center-based child care providers are defined as a provider licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a non-residential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.	<p>Describe which types of center-based settings are exempt from licensing in your State/Territory:</p> <p><u>Child care does not include the following:</u></p> <p><u>a. Arrangements operated in the home of any child receiving care if all of the children in care are related to each other and no more than two additional children are in care;</u></p> <p><u>b. Recreational programs operated for less than four consecutive months in a year;</u></p> <p><u>c. Specialized activities or instruction such as athletics, dance, art, music lessons, horseback riding, gymnastics, or organized clubs for children, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H groups, or boys and girls clubs;</u></p> <p><u>d. Drop-in or short-term care provided while parents participate in activities that are not employment related and where the parents are on the premises or otherwise easily accessible, such as drop-in or short-term care provided in health spas, bowling alleys, shopping malls, resort hotels, or churches;</u></p> <p><u>d1. Drop-in or short-term care provided by an employer for its part-time employees where (i) the child is provided care not to exceed two and one-half hours during that day, (ii) the parents are on the premises, and (iii) there are no more than 25 children in any one group in any one room;</u></p> <p><u>e. Public schools;</u></p> <p><u>f. Nonpublic schools described in Part 2 of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes that are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools</u></p>

CCDF Category of Care	CCDF Definition (§98.2)	Are any providers in your State/Territory which fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing?
		<p>Are any providers in your State/Territory which fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing?</p> <p><u>and that operate a child care facility as defined in subdivision (3) of this section for less than six and one-half hours per day either on or off the school site;</u></p> <p><u>g. Bible schools conducted during vacation periods;</u></p> <p><u>h. Care provided by facilities licensed under Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes;</u></p> <p><u>i. Cooperative arrangements among parents to provide care for their own children as a convenience rather than for employment; and</u></p> <p><u>j. Any child care program or arrangement consisting of two or more separate components, each of which operates for four hours or less per day with different children attending each component.</u></p>
<p>Group Home Child Care</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A. Check if your State/Territory does not have group home child care.</p>	<p>Group home child care provider is defined as two or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.</p>	<p>Describe which types of group homes are exempt from licensing</p>
<p>Family Child Care</p>	<p>Family child care provider is defined as one individual who provides child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, as the sole caregiver, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)'s work.</p> <p>Reminder - Do not check if family child care home providers simply must register or be certified to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State/Territory regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>Describe which types of home-based settings are exempt from licensing in your State/Territory:</p> <p><u>Child care does not include the following:</u></p> <p><u>a. Arrangements operated in the home of any child receiving care if all of the children in care are related to each other and no more than two additional children are in care;</u></p> <p><u>i. Cooperative arrangements among parents to provide care for their own children as a convenience rather than for employment; and</u></p>

CCDF Category of Care	CCDF Definition (§98.2)	Are any providers in your State/Territory which fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing?
In-Home Care	In-home child care provider is defined as an individual who provides child care services in the child's own home. Reminder - Do not check if in-home child care providers simply must register or be certified to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State/Territory regulatory requirements.	Describe which types of in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing <u>Arrangements operated in the home of any child receiving care if all of the children in care are related to each other and no more than two additional children are in care;</u>

Note: In lieu of submitting or attaching licensing regulations to certify the requirements of §98.40(a)(1), Lead Agencies may provide their licensing regulations to the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. Please check the NRCKid's website at <http://nrckids.org/> to verify the accuracy of your licensing regulations and provide any updates to the National Resource Center. **Check this box to indicate that the licensing requirements were submitted and verified at NRCKid's.**

d) **Indicate** whether your State/Territory licensing requirements include any of the following four indicators for each category of care*.

*Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2003) Stepping Stones to Using Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, 2nd Ed. Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Available online: <http://nrckids.org/stepping>

Indicator	For each indicator, check all requirements for licensing that apply, if any.			
	Center-Based Child Care	Group Home Child Care	Family Child Care	In-Home Care
Do the licensing requirements include child:staff ratios and group sizes? If yes, specify age group, where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child:staff ratio requirement: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group size requirement: <u>Children birth to twelve years of age</u> <input type="checkbox"/> No requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Child:staff ratio requirement: <input type="checkbox"/> Group size requirement: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child:staff ratio requirement: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group size requirement: <u>Children birth to twelve years of age</u> <input type="checkbox"/> No requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Child:staff ratio requirement: <input type="checkbox"/> Group size requirement: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No requirements.

<p>Do the licensing requirements identify specific experience and educational credentials for child care directors?</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<p>Do the licensing requirements identify specific experience and educational credentials for child care teachers?</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate (CDA) <input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Credential <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> No credential required for licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<p>Do the licensing requirements specify that directors and caregivers must attain a specific number of training hours per year?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 30 training hours required in first year <input type="checkbox"/> At least 24 training hours per year after first year <input type="checkbox"/> No training requirement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Complete five to twenty annual in-service training hours.</u> <u>Number of hours is based on the</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 30 training hours required in first year <input type="checkbox"/> At least 24 training hours per year after first year <input type="checkbox"/> No training requirement <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 30 training hours required in first year <input type="checkbox"/> At least 24 training hours per year after first year <input type="checkbox"/> No training requirement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Complete twelve hours of annual in-service training.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 30 training hours required in first year <input type="checkbox"/> At least 24 training hours per year after first year <input type="checkbox"/> No training requirement <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

	<u>individual's education and experience.</u>			
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e) Do you expect the licensing requirements for child care providers to change in FY2012-2013?

Yes. Describe

In 2010, the Division of Child Development assembled the Minimum Standards Logistical Team to take a closer look at North Carolina's current child care requirements to identify ways to strengthen requirements and oversight of licensed child care facilities. The team is using the reports released from two publications from the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACRRA). (*Leaving Children to Chance: 2010 Update: NACRRA's Ranking of State Standards and Oversight of Small Family Child Care Homes* and *We Can Do Better: 2011 Update: NACRRA's Ranking of State Child Care Center Regulation and Oversight*). The overall goal is to ensure children in child care are cared for in safe and healthy environments. The team makes recommendations for short and long-term changes to strengthen and improve the child care requirements. Recommendations are discussed with members of the North Carolina Child Care Commission. The Commission is responsible for adopting rules to implement the child care laws established by the North Carolina General Assembly. The Commission is highly committed to ensuring quality child care across the state.

The North Carolina QRIS Advisory Committee was convened to review the current QRIS for policy revisions and initiatives that will improve and enhance the current early care and education systems. The QRIS Advisory Committee made the following recommendations for example:

- Create minimum standards for family engagement and communication efforts.
- Participating in pilot studies for appropriate measures of assessment pertaining to family engagement, inclusion and cultural competency.
- Require the completion of a standardized Professional Development Plan Require programs to use the CSEFEL (Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) Inventory of Practices for promoting social-emotional competence
- Strengthen staff/child interactions

No

3.1.2. Compliance with Applicable State/Territory and Local Regulatory Requirements on Health and Safety

Each Lead Agency shall certify that there are in effect, within the State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF. Such requirements shall include the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization), building and physical premises safety, and minimum health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting. These health and safety requirements apply to all providers caring for children receiving CCDF services and which also may be covered by the licensing requirements. (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41)

a) **Describe** the Lead Agency’s health and safety requirements for prevention and control of infectious disease in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below. (658E(c)(2)(F)(i), §98.41(a)(1))

The Lead Agency requires:	For each health and safety requirement checked, identify which providers under the CCDF category must meet the requirement. Check all that apply.			
	Center-based child care providers	Family child care home providers	Group home child care providers	In-home child care providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical exam or health statement for providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical exam or health statement for children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis check for providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis check for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Provider immunizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child immunizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hand-washing policy for providers and children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diapering policy and procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Providers to submit a self-certification or complete health and safety checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Providers to meet the requirements of another oversight entity that fulfill the CCDF health and safety requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe • <u>At least one staff</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Lead Agency requires:	For each health and safety requirement checked, identify which providers under the CCDF category must meet the requirement. Check all that apply.			
	Center-based child care providers	Family child care home providers	Group home child care providers	In-home child care providers
<u>member must be knowledgeable of and able to recognize common symptoms of illnesses.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Administration of medication policy and procedures</u> • <u>Infectious and contagious diseases requirements for inclusion/exclusion of children in care</u> 				

b) **Describe** the Lead Agency’s health and safety requirements for building and physical premises safety, including policies and practices to protect from environmental hazards, in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below. (658E(c)(2)(F)(ii), §98.41(a)(2))

The Lead Agency requires:	For each health and safety requirement checked, identify which providers under the CCDF category must meet the requirement. Check all that apply.			
	Center-based child care providers	Family child care home providers	Group home child care providers	In-home child care providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire inspection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building inspection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health inspection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inaccessibility of toxic substances policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safe sleep policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tobacco exposure reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Providers to submit a self-certification or complete health and safety checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Providers to meet the requirements of another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	For each health and safety requirement checked, identify which providers under the CCDF category must meet the requirement. Check all that apply.			
oversight entity that fulfill the CCDF health and safety requirements				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Monthly playground inspections</u> • <u>Evacuation plan for non-ambulatory children (includes evacuation crib requirements)</u> • <u>Aquatic activity policy and procedures</u> 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

c) **Describe** the Lead Agency’s health and safety requirements for health and safety training in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below.
(658E(c)(2)(F)(iii), §98.41(a)(3))

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
Child Care Centers	CPR	<u>CPR training must have been completed within the last 12 months prior to receiving a license.</u>	<u>CPR training shall be renewed on or before the expiration of the certification or every two years, whichever is less.</u>
	First aid	<u>First aid training must have been completed within the last 12 months prior to receiving a license.</u>	<u>First aid training shall be renewed on or before the expiration of the certification or every two years, whichever is less.</u>
	Training on infectious		

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
	diseases		
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep)		<u>Complete ITS-SIDS training within 4 months of assuming caregiving responsibilities and every 3 years.</u> <u>Part of orientation for new hires, must receive training and orientation on center's operational policies, including the center's safe sleep policy (complete within first 2 weeks of hire date)</u>
	Medication administration		
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect		<u>Part of orientation for new hires, must receive training and orientation within first 2 weeks of hire date.</u>
	Child development		
	Supervision of children		<u>Part of orientation for new hires, must receive training and orientation within first 2 weeks of hire date.</u>
	Behavior management		
	Nutrition		
	Breastfeeding		
	Physical activity		
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities		
	Emergency preparedness and response		
	Other. Describe <u>Staff must complete at least 4 clock hours of training in safety. The training addresses playground safety hazards, maintenance</u>		<u>Complete five to twenty annual in-service training hours. Number of hours required to complete annually is based on the individual's</u>

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
	<u>and general upkeep, playground supervision and developmentally appropriate activities for outdoor play.</u>		<u>education and experience. Training must be from these topic areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning a safe, healthy learning environment</u> • <u>Steps to advance children’s physical and intellectual development</u> • <u>Positive ways to support children’s social and emotional development</u> • <u>Strategies to establish productive relationships with families</u> • <u>Strategies to manage an effective program operation</u> • <u>Maintaining a commitment to professionalism</u> • <u>Observing and recording children’s behavior</u> • <u>Principles of growth and development</u> • <u>Learning activities that promote inclusion of children with special needs</u>
Group Home Child Care	CPR		
	First aid		
	Training on infectious diseases		
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep)		
	Medication administration		
	Mandatory reporting of		

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
	suspected abuse or neglect		
	Child development		
	Supervision of children		
	Behavior management		
	Nutrition		
	Breastfeeding		
	Physical activity		
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities		
	Emergency preparedness and response		
	Other. Describe		
Family Child Care Providers	CPR	<u>CPR training must have been completed within the last 12 months prior to receiving a license.</u>	<u>CPR training shall be renewed on or before the expiration of the certification or every two years, whichever is less.</u>
	First aid	<u>First aid training must have been completed within the last 12 months prior to receiving a license.</u>	<u>First aid training shall be renewed on or before the expiration of the certification or every two years, whichever is less.</u>
	Training on infectious diseases		
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep)		<u>Complete training within 4 months of assuming caregiving responsibilities and every 3 years</u>
	Medication administration		
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect		
	Child development		
	Supervision of children		
	Behavior management		
	Nutrition		
	Breastfeeding		

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
	Physical activity		
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities		
	Emergency preparedness and response		
	Other. Describe		<p><u>Complete twelve annual in-service training hours.</u> <u>Training must be from these topic areas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning a safe, healthy learning environment</u> • <u>Steps to advance children’s physical and intellectual development</u> • <u>Positive ways to support children’s social and emotional development</u> • <u>Strategies to establish productive relationships with families</u> • <u>Strategies to manage an effective program operation</u> • <u>Maintaining a commitment to professionalism</u> • <u>Observing and recording children’s behavior</u> • <u>Principles of growth and development</u> • <u>Learning activities that promote inclusion of children with special needs</u>
In-Home Child Care	CPR		
	First aid		

CCDF Categories of Care	Health and safety training requirements	Pre-Service	On-Going
	Training on infectious diseases		
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep)		
	Medication administration		
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect		
	Child development		
	Supervision of children		
	Behavior management		
	Nutrition		
	Breastfeeding		
	Physical activity		
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities		
	Emergency preparedness and response		
	Other. Describe 		

d) CCDF allows Lead Agencies to exempt relative providers (grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles) from these health and safety requirements. What are the Lead Agency's requirements for relative providers? (§98.41(A)(ii)(A))

All relative providers are subject to the same health and safety requirements as described in 3.1.3a-c, as appropriate; there are no exceptions for relatives.

Relative providers are NOT required to meet any health and safety requirements as described in 3.1.3a-c, as appropriate.

Relative providers are subject to certain requirements. Describe the different requirements:

If the child care provider chosen by the parent meets the definition of a non-licensed home caregiver (except for grandparents, aunts and uncles) there are basic safety requirements the caregiver must comply with to receive any form of subsidized child care services. These requirements are in the form of a checklist and may be viewed at <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/forms/dcd/dcd-0455.pdf>. The form may be given to the parent/responsible adult to take to the provider or the child care social worker may choose to assist with completing the checklist.

Provide a web address for the State/Territory's health and safety requirements, if available: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education <http://nrckids.org/STATES/NC/northcarolina.htm>

3.1.3 Enforcement of Licensing Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to provide a detailed description of the State/Territory’s licensing requirements and how its licensing requirements are effectively enforced. (658E(c)(2)(E), §98.40(a)(2)) The Lead Agency is also required to certify that that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with the applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G), §98.41(d))

The licensing requirements are posted online at:
<http://nrckids.org/STATES/NC/northcarolina.htm>

The North Carolina General Statutes give the Division of Child Development the authority to issue a variety of enforcement actions. The North Carolina Administrative Code (Child Care Rules) specifically describes each enforcement action. North Carolina utilizes the following enforcement actions:

- Written Reprimand – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .2202
- Written Warning – Child Care Rules 10A NCAC 09 .1904 and .2203
- Provisional License – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .0401
- Special Provisional License – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .1904
- Probationary License – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .2204
- Revocation – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .2206
- Denial - Child Care Rules 10A NCAC 09 .0302 (g) and .1702(g)
- Summary Suspension – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .2207
- Suspension – Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .2205
- Civil Penalties – Child Care Rules 10A NCAC 09 .1716, .2208, .2209, .2210, .2213

Describe the State/Territory’s policies for effective enforcement of the licensing requirements using questions 3.1.3a through 3.1.3e below. This description includes whether and how the State/Territory uses visits (announced and unannounced), background checks, and any other enforcement policies and practices for the licensing requirements.

a) Does your State/Territory include **announced** and/or **unannounced** visits in its policies as a way to effectively enforce the licensing requirements?

- Yes. If “Yes” please refer to the chart below and check all that apply.
 No

CCDF Categories of Care	Frequency of Routine Announced Visits	Frequency of Routine Unannounced Visits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center-Based Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years

	<input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>As requested for technical assistance regarding any child care requirement</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Additional unannounced visits are conducted by the Division of Child Development when allegations of violations of child care requirements are received and for the purpose of evaluating the program for quality indicators (varies by facility). In some counties additional, visits are conducted by building inspectors, fire inspectors and environmental health agencies.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Home Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family Child Care Home	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>As requested for technical assistance regarding any child care requirement</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Additional unannounced visits are conducted by the Division of Child Development when allegations of violations of child care requirements are received and for the purpose of evaluating a the program for quality indicators (varies by facility). In addition, visits are conducted by building inspectors, fire inspectors and environmental health agencies in some counties.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Home Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> More than Once a Year <input type="checkbox"/> Once Every Two Years <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe

b) Does your State/Territory have any of the following procedures in place for effective enforcement of the licensing requirements? If procedures differ based on the category of care, please indicate how in the “Describe” box.

- Yes. If “Yes” please refer to the chart below and check all that apply.
 No

Licensing Procedures	Describe which procedures are used by the State/Territory for enforcement of the licensing requirements.
The State/Territory requires providers to attend or participate in training relating to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Describe <u>Requirement for new centers.</u>

Licensing Procedures	<p>Describe which procedures are used by the State/Territory for enforcement of the licensing requirements.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Optional for Family Child Care Home operators (training is offered but not currently required)</u>
Licensing staff has procedures in place to address violations found in an inspection.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providers are required to submit plans to correct violations cited during inspections. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensing staff approve the plans of correction submitted by providers. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensing staff verify correction of violation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensing staff provide technical assistance regarding how to comply with a regulation. <input type="checkbox"/> No procedures in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
Licensing staff has procedures in place to issue a negative sanction to a noncompliant facility.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provisional or probationary license <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> License revocation or non-renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Injunctions through court <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency or immediate closure not through court action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fines for regulatory violations <input type="checkbox"/> No procedures in place. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Written Reprimand, Written Warning, Special Provisional License, Suspension and Denial of a License are other enforcement actions available and outlined in Child Care Rules</u>
The State/Territory has procedures in place to respond to illegally operating child care facilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Cease and desist action <input type="checkbox"/> Injunction <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency or immediate closure not through court action <input type="checkbox"/> Fines <input type="checkbox"/> No procedures in place. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Statutory authority for misdemeanor and felony warrants (in collaboration with law enforcement agencies)</u>
The State/Territory has procedures in place for providers to appeal licensing enforcement actions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. Describe <u>provider may file an appeal with the Office of Administrative Hearings (administrative law court), contested cases may also be subject to the Final Agency Decision process following an administrative law hearing and/or appeal processes through Superior and</u>

Licensing Procedures	Describe which procedures are used by the State/Territory for enforcement of the licensing requirements.
	State Appellate Courts <input type="checkbox"/> No. <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe

c) Describe what types of licensing violations, if any, would make a provider ineligible to participate in CCDF

Specific violations alone would not make a provider ineligible but the issuance of specific enforcement actions would make a provider ineligible to receive CCDF funds beginning 45 days after the enforcement action is received by the operator. Those enforcement actions are Revocation of a License, Denial of a License and Summary Suspension of a License. In addition, the issuance of a Special Provisional License may limit the enrollment of new children that are eligible for CCDF services during the six month time period of the license. However, that restriction would not affect any currently enrolled children.

d) Does your State/Territory use **background checks** as a way to effectively enforce the licensing requirements?

Yes. If “Yes” please use refer to the chart below to identify who is required to have background checks, what types of checks, and with what frequency. Please **also provide a brief overview** of the State/Territory’s process for conducting background checks for child care. For example, describe what types of violations would make providers ineligible for CCDF, funding for background checks, and the process for providers to appeal background check findings.

Process for conducting background checks:

- NC reviews a name check from the applicant's county of residence coupled with a state fingerprint check and federal fingerprint check (when applicable) to obtain a complete criminal history on an applicant. Based on the information provided from these checks, a determination is made, based on NC child care law, as to whether an applicant is qualified to assume the responsibility of protecting the safety and well being of children in care.

- Violations that make providers ineligible

- North Carolina General Statute 110-90.2 and 110-91(8) provides the authority for criminal offenses (convictions and pending indictments/charges) that will disqualify an applicant from providing child care. Such offenses include child abuse and neglect, murder, rape, assault, drugs, DUI and other crimes of moral turpitude.

Funding

The North Carolina General Assembly provides state appropriations to pay for the federal fingerprint checks. The North Carolina Department of Justice (SBI) provides the state fingerprint checks. The providers pay for the local name check. There is current pending legislation before the 2011 General Assembly that will change this funding structure.

Process for Appeal

NCGS 110-90.2(d) allows for a disqualified applicant to appeal the decision by filing a civil lawsuit in district court within 60 days of the disqualification. DCD also provides for a reapplication process that doesn't involve the court system.

No

CCDF Categories of Care	Types of Background Check	Frequency
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center-Based Child Care</p> <p><u>Who is subject to background checks for center-based care? For example, director, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers</u></p> <p><u>Any individual who is employed by or seeks to be employed by a child care facility.</u></p> <p><u>Any individual who owns or operates or seeks to own or operate a child care facility.</u></p> <p><u>Any individual over the age of 15 years old who is a household member of a home based center in a residence.</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse Registry</p> <p><u>Not currently part of background screening process currently</u></p> <p><u>Pending legislation will address this</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Criminal Background</p> <p><u>Currently, a state fingerprint check as well as local county name check is performed on all applicants who apply to own or work in licensed or regulated child care</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>upon employment and every 3 years thereafter</u></p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)</p> <p><u>Applicants who have not lived in NC for the past 5 years are subject to a federal fingerprint check upon employment. There is pending legislation that would require a federal fingerprint check of all applicants regardless of the</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>upon employment</u></p>

CCDF Categories of Care	Types of Background Check	Frequency
	<u>length of time lived in NC.</u>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex Offender Registry <u>Registry reviewed on a monthly basis</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Monthly</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Child Care Homes Who is subject to background checks for group homes? For example, provider, non-provider residents of the home	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse Registry	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Criminal Background	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex Offender Registry	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe

CCDF Categories of Care	Types of Background Check	Frequency
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family Child Care Homes</p> <p>Who is subject to background checks for family child care homes? For example, provider, non-provider residents of the home</p> <p><u>Any individual who is an owner or seeks to own a Family Child Care Home (FCCH)</u></p> <p><u>Any individual who is employed by or seeks to be employed by a FCCH.</u></p> <p><u>Any individual (and household members over the age of 15 years old) who receives federal subsidy dollars, but are not licensed by DCD, but who are regulated through the local county DSS.</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse Registry</p> <p><u>Not currently part of background screening process currently</u></p> <p><u>Pending legislation will address this</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Criminal Background</p> <p><u>Currently, a state fingerprint check as well as local county name check is performed on all applicants who apply to own or work in licensed or regulated child care</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>upon employment and every 3 years thereafter</u></p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)</p> <p><u>Applicants who have not lived in NC for the past 5 years are subject to a federal fingerprint check upon employment. There is pending legislation that would require a federal fingerprint check of all applicants regardless of the length of time lived in NC.</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Upon employment</u></p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex Offender Registry</p> <p><u>Registry reviewed on a monthly basis.</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Monthly</u></p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> In-Home Child Care Providers</p> <p>Who is subject to background checks for in-home child care? For</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse Registry</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually</p>

CCDF Categories of Care	Types of Background Check	Frequency
example, provider, non-provider residents of the home		<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> State/Territory Criminal Background	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex Offender Registry	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Entrance into the System <input type="checkbox"/> Checks Conducted Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe

e) If not performing visits (announced or unannounced) or background checks, describe how the State/Territory will ensure that its licensing requirements are effectively enforced per the CCDF regulations? N/A (658E(c)(2)(E), §98.40(a)(2))

f) Does the State/Territory disseminate information to parents and the public, including the use of on-line tools or other “search tools,” about child care program licensing status and compliance records?

Yes. Describe

The NC Division of Child Development website (www.ncchildcare.net) offers information to parents, providers and staff regarding the child care requirements. This includes a search feature that parents may utilize to review facility compliance records. Those records include documentation from each visit, violations cited during visits and whether or not an enforcement action has been issued. Currently, the enforcement actions are

not posted on the website but the website does indicate if an enforcement action has been issued within the past three years and states if that enforcement action is under appeal. In addition, there is an email request form for public records that may be submitted to the Division for processing.

No

3.1.4 Describe the State/Territory's policies for effective enforcement of the health and safety requirements. For providers who care for children receiving CCDF assistance and who are NOT subject to the enforcement procedures described above for licensed providers, please describe the health and safety enforcement measures in place. Include in this description whether and how the State/Territory uses on-site visits (announced and unannounced) and background checks and any other enforcement policies and practices for the health and safety requirements.

In-home care does not meet the state definition of a child care center or home and is, therefore, exempt from state regulation; however, a certain number of non-licensed home providers are visited each year to ensure that they are in compliance with the health and safety requirements required for participation in the subsidy program. The health and safety checklist is a self-checklist completed by the parent and the provider together.

Non-licensed home providers who receive child care subsidies must have criminal background checks. Household members of family child care or non-licensed home providers over age 15 who are present while children are in care must also have the background check completed. Once the facility is licensed, any new members joining the household over age 15 who are present while children are in care must also have the background check completed. Early care and education providers, non-licensed home providers and household members will also be subject to re-qualification by means of a name check every three (3) years.

3.1.5 Does the State/Territory conduct developmental screenings of children? Lead Agencies are not required to conduct developmental screenings of children, but they State/Territory may choose to voluntarily conduct or require programs to conduct such screenings for other purposes.

Yes. Describe Required for state Pre-K programs; Early Head Start and Head Start programs

a) If yes, are resources and supports provided to programs for conducting developmental screenings?

Yes. Describe Required for state Pre-K programs; Early Head Start and Head Start programs

- No
- Other. Describe

b) If yes, are resources and supports provided to programs to track when follow-up to screening is needed?

- Yes. Describe Required for state Pre-K programs; Early Head Start and Head Start programs
- No
- Other. Describe

- No
- Other. Describe

3.1.6 Data & Performance Measures on Licensing and Health and Safety Compliance – What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory currently have access to related to licensing compliance? What, if any, performance measures does the Lead Agency use for ensuring health and safety? The purpose of these questions is for Lead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked, Lead Agencies may choose to describe for whom they access to these data on such as only licensed programs, only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participating in quality improvement systems, or only for certain age groups (e.g., infants and toddlers or school-age children).

a) Data on licensing and health and safety. Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

- Number of licensed programs. Describe (optional) Lead agency tracks the number of licensed child care facilities. As of February 2011, North Carolina has 8, 275 licensed facilities (4,907 centers and 3,368 family child care homes).
- Numbers of programs operating that are legally exempt from licensing. Describe (optional) Drop-in care and non-licensed providers receiving funds from the subsidized child care program.
- Number of programs whose licenses were suspended or revoked due to non-compliance. Describe (optional) Varies, but approximately 50 revocations per year and 20 summary suspensions per year (this is based on SFY09-10). These numbers are representative of all licensed facilities, not just programs receiving CCDF funds.
- Number of injuries and fatalities in child care as defined by the State/Territory. Describe (optional)
- Number of monitoring visits received by programs. Describe (optional) Varies, but at least one per year, more if complaints are received and/or enforcement action is issued (enforcement monitoring is every 4-6 weeks for duration of action).
- Caseload of licensing staff. Describe (optional) Caseload

currently averaging 75-80 per child care consultant.

Number of programs revoked from CCDF due to non-compliance with health and safety requirements. Describe (optional)

Other. Describe

None

b) Performance measurement. What, if any, performance measures does the State/Territory use in its licensing system to monitor compliance with CCDF health and safety requirements? North Carolina uses Article 7 Chapter 110 of the North Carolina General Statutes and Chapter 9 – Child Care Rules as the measures to verify compliance with CCDF health and safety requirements. Here is a link to the requirements: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/NC/northcarolina.htm>

c) Evaluation. What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to licensing and health and safety? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

After a license is issued, the Lead Agency is responsible for monitoring the facility to assure that compliance is being maintained. Monitoring compliance is an official observation to determine ongoing compliance. One goal of monitoring is to reduce noncompliance to avoid issuing negative administrative actions in the future. Monitoring visits also reveal whether an operator has corrected previously documented violations. Compliance visits include routine visits, complaint investigations, annual compliance visits, and follow-up visits. The Lead Agency conducts at least an unannounced annual compliance visit to each facility plus complaint investigation visits, and routine monitoring visits are completed as needed. Specific requirements at a minimum must be monitored during certain types of visits.

North Carolina's Quality Rating and Improvement System is tied to the licensing system and is identified by a One to Five Star Rated License. The Rated License Program is North Carolina's means of recognizing child care facilities that provide higher quality care than the minimum One Star level. It is also a way to encourage facilities to continue working to improve the quality of care being provided. Facilities are rated according to the applicable components they choose to meet. North Carolina assigns ratings every three years and monitor annually for maintenance of ratings. A reassessment of the rating may also be conducted before the three year time period if the annual monitoring identified certain indicators, such

as, high staff turnover, a new director, or serious licensing violations. A program may also request a rated license assessment if it anticipates the rating will improve.

3.1.7 Goals for the next Biennium - What are the Lead Agency's goals for the licensing and health and safety system in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make on core areas (e.g. higher licensing standards, more programs covered by licensing standards or health and safety requirements, more frequent visits or other effective enforcement, improved technical assistance, or fewer serious non-compliances?)

- QRIS Advisory Committee *The Division of Child Development convened a QRIS Advisory Committee* to review the current QRIS, provide a vision for the future of the QRIS and make recommendations for short and long term changes that will lead the state toward their vision examples include:
 - Require ITS-SIDS training as a pre-service requirement.
 - Lower ratios for infants & toddlers
 - Require programs to use the CSEFEL (Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) Inventory of Practices for promoting social-emotional competence.
 - Enhance space requirements 35 square feet per child. National Health and Safety Standards.
 - Create minimum standards for family engagement and communication efforts.
 - The diversity and culture of families are reflected in all aspects of the program.
- Criminal Record Check bill and rule changes requiring federal checks for all applicants as a pre-service requirement. Also would require checking the sex offender registry.

3.2 Establishing Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines (Component #2)

For purposes of this section, voluntary early learning guidelines include the expectations for what children should know (content) and be able to do (skills). The term *early learning guidelines* (ELGs) refers to age-appropriate developmental learning guidelines for infants and toddlers and school-age children.

3.2.1 Has the State/Territory developed voluntary early learning guidelines for children? Check any early learning guidelines the State/Territory has developed.

Birth-to-three

- Three-to-five
- Five years and older
- None. **Skip to 3.2.6.**

If yes, insert web addresses, where possible:

Infant-Toddler Foundations: Guidelines for development and learning for North Carolina's infants and toddlers (birth to 36 months)

http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/pdf_forms/dcd_infant_toddler_early_foundations.pdf

Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success

<http://www.ncprek.nc.gov/Foundations/pdf/PART-01-letter.acknowledgements.etc..pdf>

Which State/Territory agency is the lead for the early learning guidelines? The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is the lead agency for Infant-Toddler Foundations and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is the lead agency for Foundations for preschool children.

3.2.2 Do the early learning guidelines cover a range of domains across physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development? Check all that apply for each age group as applicable in the chart below.

Domains	Birth-to-Three ELGs	Three-to-Five ELGs	Five and Older ELGs
Physical development and health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social and emotional development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approaches to learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Logic and reasoning (e.g., problem-solving)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literacy knowledge and skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematics knowledge and skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science knowledge and skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative arts expression (e.g., music, art, drama)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social studies knowledge and skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English language development (for dual language learners)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
List any domains not covered in the above <u>Cultural Competence and Inclusion</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other. Describe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2.3 To whom are the early learning guidelines disseminated and in what manner? Check all audiences and methods that your State/Territory has chosen to use in the chart below.

	Information Dissemination	Voluntary Training	Mandatory Training
Parents in the child care subsidy system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents using child care more broadly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practitioners in child care centers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providers in family child care home homes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practitioners in Head Start	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practitioners in Early Head Start	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practitioners in public Pre-K program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Practitioners in elementary schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other. List	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2.4 Are voluntary early learning guidelines incorporated into other parts of the child care system? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory incorporates its early learning guidelines into other parts of the child care system.

- To define the content of training required to meet licensing requirements
- To define the content of training required for program quality improvement standards (e.g., QRIS standards)
- To define the content of training required for the career lattice or professional credential
- To require programs in licensing standards to develop curriculum/learning activities based on the voluntary ELGs
- To require programs in quality improvement standards to develop curriculum/learning activities based on the voluntary ELGs
- To develop State-/Territory –approved curricula
- Other List More at Four; Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Project Trainings and TA; Some Community College EC coursework

3.2.5 Are voluntary early learning guidelines aligned with into other parts of the child care system? Check the standards, if any, with which the State/Territory aligns its early learning guidelines.

- Cross-walked to align with Head Start Outcomes Framework
- Cross-walked to align with K-12 content standards

- Cross-walked to align with State/Territory pre-k standards
- Cross-walked with accreditation standards
- Other. List
- None.

3.2.6 Describe how your State/Territory uses ongoing assessments and measures of school readiness assessment using the following series of questions. In the description for each Yes response, please include a) who administers and b) how often assessments are conducted.

a) Are programs required to conduct ongoing assessments of children's progress of children using measures aligned with the early learning guidelines or other child standards?

Yes. Describe Required for State pre-k

b-1) If yes, are programs encouraged to use information from ongoing assessments to improve practice and individual children's needs?

- Yes. Describe Required for State pre-k
- No
- Other. Describe

b-2) If yes, is information on child's progress reported to parents?

- Yes. Describe Required for State pre-k
 - No
 - Other. Describe
- No
- Other. Describe

b) Does the State/Territory use measures to track the readiness of children as they kindergarten?

Yes. Describe

c-1) If yes, do the measures cover the developmental domains identified in 3.2.2?

- Yes. Describe
- No
- Other. Describe

c-2) If yes, are the measures used on all children or samples of children?

- All children. Describe
- Samples of children. Describe
- Other. Describe

c-3) If yes, is the information from the school readiness measures used to target program quality improvement activities?

- Yes. Describe
- No
- Other. Describe

- No
- Other. Describe

3.2.7 Data & Performance Measures on Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines – What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory have access to on the dissemination of, implementation of, or children’s attainment of the early learning guidelines? What, if any, performance measures does the State/Territory use for dissemination and implementation of the early learning guidelines? The purpose of these questions is for Lead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked, Lead Agencies may choose to describe for whom they access to these data on such as only licensed programs, only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participating in quality improvement systems, or only for certain age groups (infants and toddlers or school-age children).

a) **Data on voluntary early learning guidelines.** Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

- Number/percentage of child care providers trained on ELG’s for preschool aged children. Describe (optional)
- Number/percentage of child care providers trained on ELG’s for infants and toddlers. Describe (optional)
- Number of programs using ELG’s in planning for their work. Describe (optional)
- Number of parents trained on or served in family support programs that use ELG’s. Describe (optional)
- Other. Describe
- None

b) **Performance measurement.** What, if any, are the Lead Agency’s performance measures related to dissemination and implementation of the early learning guidelines? Through its Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Project, the Lead Agency is developing a teacher resource of materials & activities to support implementation of Infant Toddler Foundations (ITF), & a 5-hour training on ITF implementation. In addition, each CCR&R Region makes available training on preschool Foundations.

c) **Evaluation.** What are the State/Territory’s plans, if any, for evaluation

related to early learning guidelines and the progress of children in child care? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative validation of standards or program assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Project is developing a cross-walk between Infant Toddler Foundations, ITERS-R, and CSEFEL Inventory of Practices to assess infant toddler classroom environments.

3.2.8 Goals for the next Biennium - What are the Lead Agency's goals for using voluntary early learning guidelines in the coming biennium? What progress does the Lead Agency expect to make related to early learning guidelines?

Developing tools to track and record implementation of Infant Toddler Foundations in classrooms across the state and explore ways to embed in QRIS.

3.3 Creating Pathways to Excellence for Child Care Programs through Program Quality Improvement Activities (Component #3)

This section builds on the significant investments States and Territories have made in the area of program quality improvement systems. In this section, States and Territories provide a self-assessment on current program quality improvement activities and describe their goals for the upcoming Biennium.

For purposes of this section, States and Territories will respond according to a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) framework. QRIS refers to a systematic framework for evaluating, improving and communicating the level of quality in early childhood programs and contains five key elements:

1. Program standards
2. Supports to programs to improve quality
3. Financial incentives and supports
4. Quality assurance and monitoring
5. Outreach and consumer education

While not all States and Territories have developed or implemented a formal QRIS, all are pursuing quality improvement strategies that can be described within this framework (based upon previous CCDF Plans). Using this framework to organize this section allows States/Territories to report on their quality improvement activities systematically whether they have a QRIS or not. Over time, States and Territories are encouraged to work on linking their quality improvement initiatives and strategies across all of these elements, culminating in a comprehensive Quality Rating and Improvement System with adequate support for providers to attain higher levels of quality and transparency for parents and the community regarding the quality of child care.

a) Describe which entities are involved in planning and administering the program quality improvement activities in 3.3, including State/Territory entities and local or community level entities. DCD; QRIS Advisory Committee; Professional Development Advisory Committee; CCR&R; Smart Start; Rated License Assessment Project; More at Four; Head Start; Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center; Institutes of Higher Education.

3.3 Creating Pathways to Excellence for Child Care Programs through Program Quality Improvement Activities (Component #3)

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For purposes of this section, States and Territories will respond according to a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) framework. QRIS refers to a systematic framework for evaluating, improving and communicating the level of quality in early childhood programs and contains five key elements:

6. Program standards
7. Supports to programs to improve quality
8. Financial incentives and supports
9. Quality assurance and monitoring
10. Outreach and consumer education

While not all States and Territories have developed or implemented a formal QRIS, all are pursuing quality improvement strategies that can be described within this framework (based upon previous CCDF Plans). Using this framework to organize this section allows States/Territories to report on their quality improvement activities systematically whether they have a QRIS or not. Over time, States and Territories are encouraged to work on linking their quality improvement initiatives and strategies across all of these elements, culminating in a comprehensive Quality Rating and Improvement System with adequate support for providers to attain higher levels of quality and transparency for parents and the community regarding the quality of child care.

a) Describe which entities are involved in planning and administering the program quality improvement activities in 3.3, including State/Territory entities and local or community level entities.

3.3.1 Element 1 – Program Standards

Definition – For purposes of this section, program standards refers to the expectations for quality, or quality indicators, which identify different levels of and pathways to improved quality. Minimum licensing standards and health and safety requirements provided in section 3.1 are also program standards but in

this section, we focus on those standards that build upon and go beyond those minimum requirements.

a) Does your State/Territory's have quality improvement standards that include indicators covering the following areas beyond what is required for licensing? Check any indicators, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to establish.

- Ratios and group size
- Health, nutrition and safety
- Learning environment and curriculum
- Staff/Provider qualifications and professional development
- Teacher/providers-child relationships
- Teacher/provider instructional practices
- Family partnerships and family strengthening
- Community relationships
- Administration and management
- Developmental screenings
- Child assessment for the purposes of individualizing instruction and/or targeting program improvement
- Cultural competence
- Other. Describe
- None. If checked, skip to 3.3.2.

b) Does your State/Territory have quality improvement standards with provisions about the care of any of these groups of children? Check any provisions your State/Territory has chosen to establish.

- Children with special needs as defined by your State/Territory (Developmental Day Programs)
- Infants and toddlers
- School-age children
- Children who are dual language learners
- None

c) How do your State/Territory's quality standards link to State/Territory licensing requirements? Check any links between your State/Territory's quality standards and licensing requirements.

- Licensing is a pre-requisite for participation
- Licensing is the first tier of the quality levels
- State/Territory license is a "rated" license.
- Other. Describe
- Not linked.

d) Do your State/Territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards? Check any

alignment, if any, between your State/Territory’s quality standards and other standards.

- Programs that meet State/Territory pre-k standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or there is a reciprocal agreement between pre-k and the quality improvement system)
- Programs that meet Federal Head Start Performance Standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or there is a reciprocal agreement between Head Start and the quality improvement system)
- Programs that meet national accreditation standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or an alternative pathway to meeting the standards)
- Other. Describe
- None

3.3.2 Element 2 – Supports to Programs to Improve Quality

Definition – For purposes of this section, supports to programs to improve quality refers to such activities as technical assistance and consultation services for programs to assist in meeting child care quality improvement standards.

a) Check which types of and for what purposes the State/Territory uses supports to child care programs, if any, in the following chart. If none, skip to 3.3.3.

Types and Purposes of Support	Information or Written Materials	Training	On-Site Consultation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attaining and maintaining licensing compliance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attaining and maintaining quality improvement standards beyond licensing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Attaining and maintaining accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providing targeted technical assistance in specialized content areas:			
Health and safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Infant/toddler care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School-age care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teaching dual language learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Types and Purposes of Support	Information or Written Materials	Training	On-Site Consultation
Mental health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business management practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other. Describe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> None. Skip to 3.3.3.			

b) Methods used to customize quality improvement supports to the needs of individual programs include:

- Program improvement plans
- Technical assistance on the use of program assessment tools
- Other. Describe

c) Is technical assistance linked to entering the QRIS or targeted to help programs forward on QRIS?

- Yes. Describe
- No
- Other. Describe

3.3.3 Element 3 – Financial Incentives and Supports

Definition – For purposes of this section, financial incentives refers to the types of monetary supports offered to programs in meeting and sustaining licensing and QRIS or other child care quality improvement standards for programs.

a) Identify which types of financial incentives are offered and to which providers in the following chart. Check which incentives and supports, if any, the State/Territory chooses to offer. If none, skip to 3.3.4.

Types of Financial Incentives and Supports for Programs	Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes	License-Exempt Providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants to programs to meet or maintain licensing (Smart Start)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grants to programs to meet QRIS or similar quality level (Smart Start)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> One-time awards or bonuses on completion of quality standard attainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tiered reimbursement tied to quality for children receiving subsidy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-going, periodic grants or stipends tied to maintaining quality (Smart Start)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tax credits tied to meeting program quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Types of Financial Incentives and Supports for Programs	Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes	License-Exempt Providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. <u>Describe T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program and WAGES Salary Supplement Program</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> None. Skip to 3.3.4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.4 – Element 4 - Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Definition – For purposes of this section, quality assurance and monitoring refers to the ways that the State/Territory measures program quality for the purposes of its QRIS or other quality improvement system and the methods for measuring that the child care quality improvement standards for programs are met initially and maintained over time.

- a) What tools, if any, does the State/Territory use to measure and monitor the quality of programs? Check all that apply and briefly describe using the chart below, including which programs are required to participate and the frequency of assessments. **If none, skip to 3.3.5.**

Types of Program Quality Assessment Tools	Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes	License-Exempt Providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment Rating Scales (e.g., ECERS, ITERS, SACERS, FDCRS) Describe, including frequency of assessments. <u>Every 3 years or before by request of the facility operator. A reassessment of the rating may also be conducted before the three year time period if the annual monitoring identified certain indicators, such as, high staff turnover, a new director, or serious licensing violations.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infant/Toddler <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preschool <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School-Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Describe, including frequency of assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Administration Scale (PAS) for child care centers or Business Administration Scale (BAS) for family child care homes Describe, including frequency of assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Customized instrument, including	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

submission of written documentation, developed for State/Territory quality improvement system. This may include instruments developed for quality improvements in 21 st Century Learning Center programs			
Describe, including frequency of assessments.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe <u>Child Care Licensing Consultants monitor child care programs.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> None. Skip to 3.3.5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) What steps, if any, has the State/Territory taken to align quality assurance and monitoring across funding streams and sectors in order to minimize duplication?

- Have a mechanism to track different quality assessments/monitoring activities to avoid duplication
- Include QRIS or other quality reviews as part of licensing enforcement
- Have compliance monitoring in one sector (e.g., Head Start/Early Head Start, State/Territory pre-k) serve as validation for compliance with quality improvement system (e.g., QRIS) without further review
- Have monitoring for meeting accreditation standards serve as validation for compliance with quality improvement system (e.g., QRIS) without further review
- Other. Describe More At Four (MAF) Monitoring Plan
- None

3.3.5 – Element 5 - Outreach and Consumer Education

Definition – For purposes of this section, outreach and consumer education refers to the strategies used to promote the child care quality improvement standards to parents, programs and the general public.

a) Does the State/Territory use symbols or simple icons to communicate levels of quality for child care programs beyond what may communicated to parents about licensing status and licensing compliance as reported in 3.1.3? (e.g. stars, or gold/silver/bronze levels).

- Yes. If yes, how is it used?
 - Resource and referral/consumer education services use with parents seeking care
 - Parents enrolling in child care subsidy are educated about the system and the quality level of the provider that they are selecting
 - Searchable database on the web

- Voluntarily, visibly posted in programs
- Mandatory to post visibly in programs
- Used in marketing and public awareness campaigns
- Other. Describe
- No. If no, skip to 3.3.6.

b) Does the State/Territory use any forms of media to reach parents and the public to communicate about levels of quality for child care programs? Check which forms, if any, the State/Territory uses to communicate levels of quality for child care programs.

- Print
- Radio
- Television
- Web
- Telephone
- Social Marketing
- Other. Describe
- None

c) Describe any targeted outreach for culturally and linguistically diverse families. The CCR&R system is required to provide targeted outreach and referrals in the two most dominant languages in each region of the state.

3.3.6. Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

a) **Based on the five key elements of a QRIS described above in 3.3.1 through 3.3.5**, does your State/Territory have a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) or similar quality improvement system in place?

- Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS or similar quality improvement system that includes linked activities in all five elements operating State/Territory-wide.
 - Participation is voluntary for licensed child care centers and family child care home operators eligible to apply for a Two to Five Star Rated License.
 - Participation is mandatory for One star program
- Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS or similar quality improvement system that includes linked activities in all five elements operating as a pilot or in a few localities but not State/Territory-wide.
- No, the State/Territory does not have a QRIS or similar quality improvement system that includes linked activities in all five elements.
 - State/Territory is in the development phase
 - State/Territory has no plans for development
- Other. Describe

b) If yes to 3.3.6a, **CHECK** the types of providers eligible to participate in the QRIS:

- Child care centers
- Group child care homes
- Family child care homes
- In-home child care
- License exempt providers
- Early Head Start programs
- Head Start programs
- Pre-kindergarten programs
- School-age programs
- Other. Describe

3.3.7. If the State/Territory has or will have any quality improvement strategies for targeted groups of providers (e.g., relative caregivers or caregivers who are legally exempt from licensing) that are not described in your responses to any question in section 3.3 above, please describe

The Division of Child Development is currently targeting improvement for 1 and 2 star programs.

3.3.8 Data & Performance Measures on Program Quality – What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory currently have access to related to the quality of programs? What, if any, does the State/Territory use for performance measures on program quality improvement? The purpose of these questions is for Lead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked, Lead Agencies may choose to describe for whom they access to these data on such as only licensed programs, only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participating in quality improvement systems, or only for certain age groups (infants and toddlers or school-age children).

a) **Data on program quality.** Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

- Data on the quality level for individual programs (e.g. QRIS level) as defined by your State/Territory. Describe This data is tracked for all licensed child care facilities.
- Number of programs that move program quality levels annually (up or down). Describe This data is tracked for all licensed child care facilities.
- Program scores on program assessment instruments. List instruments: Describe
 - o The North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project conducts environment rating scales assessment for North Carolina child care facilities. The Assessors use the

ITERS-R for infant and toddlers center classrooms, the ECERS-R for early childhood center classrooms, the FCCERS for family child care homes and the SACERS for school age classrooms are used to assess the quality of child care programs in North Carolina. The Division of Child Development continues to use CCDF funds to support the implementation of North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project.
www.ncrlap.org

- The recent study conducted by the North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project at The University of North Carolina Greensboro, validates 4 and 5 star centers provide higher quality child care. Children of all ages experience significantly higher quality learning environments and received more appropriate instructional and emotional support in 4 and 5 star centers compared to their peers in centers with 1 to 3 stars. Young children demonstrated more advanced cognitive and social skills in higher quality child care. Children had more positive learning experiences and were more engaged in learning activities in higher quality child care.

☒ Classroom scores on program assessment instruments. List instruments: Describe

- The North Carolina Rated License Assessors use the ITERS-R for infant and toddlers center classrooms, the ECERS-R for early childhood center classrooms, the FCCERS for family child care homes and the SACERS for school age classrooms are used to assess classrooms. The Division of Child Development continues to use CCDF funds to support the implementation of this project.
- The Statewide Infant–Toddler Quality Enhancement project administered by NC CCR&R Council agency Child Care Services Association, provides technical assistance, training and classroom assessment to infant toddler classrooms for programs in efforts to increase the quality and availability of high quality infant and toddler child care for families across North Carolina. The Statewide Infant–Toddler Specialists provide technical assistance to support successful implementation of best practices in infant toddler care and education by using the Environment Rating Scales (ITERS-R, FCCERS), the

Infant-Toddler Foundations, the Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC), the Center for Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL) Infant Toddler Inventory of Practices, and other current research and evidence based materials to assess infant-toddler classrooms. The Division of Child Development continues to use CCDF funds to support the implementation of this project.

www.childcareservices.org

- The Statewide Healthy Social Behaviors project administered by the NC CCR &R Council Agency Child Care Resources Inc., provides technical assistance, training and assessments to prevent and address the challenging behaviors of children enrolled in licensed child care centers in North Carolina by systematically and intentionally promoting the social-emotional health of these young children. The Health Social Behaviors Specialist, are trained to administer, score and interpret the following child assessments that screen for social-emotional delays and concerns: Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE). The Division of Child Development continues to use CCDF funds to support the implementation of this project.

- The Statewide School Age Quality Improvement Project administered by the NC CCR&R Council agency provides technical assistance to school age classrooms to improve the quality and availability of child care services for school age children in North Carolina, by increasing the supply of licensed and high quality school age child care spaces. The School Age Quality Improvement Project is designed to assist programs serving school age children to obtain licensure or to increase star licensure level. School age Specialist support successful implementation of best practices in school age care using the School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) and other current research and evidence based materials. The Division of Child Development continues to use CCDF funds to support the implementation of this project.

www.childcareresourceinc.org

Qualifications for teachers or caregivers within each program.

- Describe: Requirements have been adopted to establish appropriate qualifications for all staff in child care facilities. The standards shall reflect teachers or caregivers training, experience and education and credentialing. Requirements vary for different child care positions. Minimum requirements for Lead Teachers consist of the North Carolina Early Childhood Credential (NCECC) or its equivalent. Minimum requirements for Administrators/Directors consist of the North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential (NCECAC) or its equivalent. Both credentials are offered at 58 North Carolina Community Colleges. At the highest level, Lead Teachers have at least an Associates Degree in ECE and Directors have at least a Bachelor in ECE.
- http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/providers/pv_sn2_ereq.asp
- Early Educator Certification (EEC) is North Carolina's certification system for the field of Early Childhood. EEC is an acknowledgement of an individual's verified level of educational achievement, based on a standardized scale. The Early Education Certification is administered by the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals, which serves as the certifying body for early care and education and school age professionals in North Carolina. The NC Institute for Early Childhood Professionals Development is a central strategy in its efforts to promote the professional development of North Carolinas early childhood professionals.
www.ncicdp.org

- Number/Percentage of children receiving CCDF assistance in licensed care. Describe
- Number/percentage of children receiving CCDF assistance who attend care at each of the tiers of the quality as defined by the State/Territory
- Number/Percentage of programs receiving financial assistance to meet higher program standards. Describe
- Other. Describe
- None

b) **Performance measurement.** What, if any, are the Lead Agency's performance measures on program quality?

- Facilities that apply for 3 or more program points in

standards in the Star Rated License System program quality are measured by the use of the Environment Rating Scale Assessment Tool. The North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project provides environment rating scales assessment for facilities. Results from these assessments are used to achieve higher star licensure and to inform providers to improve the quality of child care programs. Quality rating assessments are conducted by trained Assessors. Assessors are employed by the University of North Carolina-Greensboro and are located throughout the state.

- c) **Evaluation.** What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to program quality? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.
- The North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project (NCRLAP) is collaboration between the North Carolina Division of Child Development (DCD) and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. NCRLAP purpose is to conduct voluntary assessments for child care centers and family child care homes attempting to earn a higher star rating in the North Carolina Star Rated License system. Child care programs with higher rating scale scores can earn more Program Standards points. Highly trained assessors seek to determine the quality of children's care and education using items found in the Environment Rating Scales. To conduct a valid assessment, assessors attempt to complete the assessment on a "typical day" (e.g., usual routine, no special activities or guests). Also, each classroom or family child care home must have more than half of the children enrolled in attendance on the day of the assessment. Finally, each home or classroom being assessed should expect two assessors for the observation, although it is possible that only one assessor will conduct the observation. In multi-classroom centers, a minimum of one-third of the total classrooms will be assessed. This will include at least one classroom from each age group requiring a specific rating scale (i.e., one infant/toddler classroom, one school-age classroom, etc.).
 - The Statewide Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement project staff will develop a crosswalk that will align NC's early learning guidelines for birth to three, *Infant-Toddler*

Foundations, with the ITERS-R and the Infant Toddler Inventory of Practices (CSEFEL) to promote the *Infant-Toddler Foundations* as the “starting point for developing appropriate curriculum, child assessment, program assessment and professional development for infant and toddler programs and staff in North Carolina.

- The Statewide Healthy Social Behaviors project staff will develop a crosswalk between CSEFEL Inventory of Practices (IOP) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) to facilitate teachers’, administrators’ and technical assistance providers’ understanding of the role of the social-emotional domain in rated license assessments and its compatibility with classroom goals set using the Inventory of Practices (IOP).
www.childcareresourceinc.org
- The North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project piloted a project, “*A Comparison of Quality Assessment Tools*”. The purpose of the project was to pilot a variety of observation measures that may better inform our understanding of child care quality. One of the major focuses was to honor the diversity in children, their families, and the programs that serve them. Testing new measures may help us to create an accountability system that better meets the diverse needs of North Carolina’s child care programs. This knowledge may also help us understand and meet the quality enhancement needs of programs at each star level in our state. Another goal of the project was to evaluate the quality of child care in the state of North Carolina and to examine and differentiate various measures of quality and to relate start levels with quality measured by the instruments below. In North Carolina, child care programs are currently distinguished by the star ratings on their licenses. This is a summary of the measures used in this project: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS); Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale (POEMS); Out of School Time (OST) Observation Instrument; Comfort and Contentedness of Children in Child Care (C5); Teacher Satisfaction Inventory (TSI); NEO Five-Factor Inventory; Brief Infant/Toddler Social Emotional Assessment (BITSEA); Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire (ECBQ); Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS); Child Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ; Very Short Form); Flexible Item Selection Task (FIST);

Conceptual Perspective Taking; and Motivation Approach to Learning.

The results of this study validates that 4 and 5 star centers provide higher quality child care. Children of all ages experience significantly higher quality learning environments and received more appropriate instructional and emotional support in 4 and 5 star centers compared to their peers in centers with 1 to 3 stars. Young children demonstrated more advanced cognitive and social skills in higher quality child care. Children had more positive learning experiences and were more engaged in learning activities in higher quality child care.

3.3.9 Goals for the next Biennium - What are the State/Territory's goals for the program quality improvement system in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make across the five key elements for quality improvement systems?

- The Division of Child Development convened a QRIS Advisory Committee to review the current QRIS, provide a vision for the future of the QRIS and make recommendations for short and long term changes that will lead the state toward that vision. The Division of Child Development identified the help from a diverse group of early care and educators, partners and stakeholders from across the state of North Carolina to provide the broadest perspectives. The QRIS Advisory recommendations will include suggestions for policy revisions and initiatives that will improve and enhance the current system. The QRIS Advisory Committee was divided into workgroups that focused on specific areas of Program Standards, Program Assessment, System Evaluation, Professional Development, Finance and Infants/Toddlers. All of the recommendations of the QRIS has been developed into a crosswalk that references the current child care rule related to the recommendation (if one exists) and shows the connections between the workgroups, how the recommendations overlap, and the common themes and goals. Examples of some of the recommendations from the QRIS Advisory Committee for the coming biennium include:

Program Standards

- Prohibit the use of cell phones while driving children in child care

- Require ITS-SIDS training as a pre-service requirement
- Lower ratios for infants & toddlers (will involve a cost to providers, but this issue was a thread through all groups and so a decision was made to at least raise the issue for discussion)
- Consider mixed-age groupings
- Strengthen staff/child interactions
- Create minimum standards for family engagement and communication efforts
- Require programs to use the CSEFEL (Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) Inventory of Practices for promoting social-emotional competence

Education/Professional Development

- Require the completion of a standardized Professional Development Plan
- Develop standardized orientation content with online accessibility
- Require system-wide ECE articulation agreements
- Encourage the development of a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Leadership & Management

The Division of Child Development has focused on other quality improvement efforts that will improve the quality and availability of child care.

- The Division of Child Development continues to partner with the Center for Community Self Help to administer the Child Care Revolving Loan Fund (CCRLF) is a response to the dearth of care in rural counties, growing need for high quality child care in North Carolina in general and the lack of funding avenues available to many child care providers that serve disadvantage children and their families.
www.self-help.org

The Division of Child Development was awarded a technical assistance grant from the Center on *Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning* (CSEFEL) in late 2007. This partnership requires collaborative teaming of state agencies to promote knowledge and implementation of the *Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Development of Infants and Young Children* throughout North Carolina's early care and education community. The NC/CSEFEL Partnership is working toward the vision of embedding the Pyramid Model into North Carolina's professional development systems. The following activities

will be implemented by the Statewide Healthy Social Behavior Project:

- Conducted training for CCR&R technical assistance providers on Pyramid Model
- Piloted CEU modules for child care staff in three R&R regions
- Developed and conducted training for child care administrators on Pyramid Model
- Developed five standardized trainings on selected CSEFEL content
- Maintained listserv and produced electronic newsletter to connect the ever-growing NC/CSEFEL Training and Technical Assistance Community
- Provided intensive coaching, training and resources to six public school LEAs to establishing Pyramid Model preschool classrooms across the state.
- Embedded the Pyramid Model into existing community College Coursework.
- Provided professional development opportunities for early intervention staff.
- Provided training for and by child care health consultants on the Pyramid Model.
- Provided training and technical assistance around the Pyramid Model in Head start and Migrant Head Start classrooms.
- Conducted professional development opportunities on the Pyramid Model via webinar (NCPC)
www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

3.4 Pathways to Excellence for the Workforce – Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (Component #4)

Pathways to excellence for the workforce builds on the significant investments States and Territories have made in the area of professional development systems to ensure a well-qualified workforce with opportunities for growth from entry level through master teacher, with an increasing emphasis on the many additional roles in the child care system (e.g. adult educators such as consultants, technical assistance providers, trainers, and higher education faculty). In this section, States and Territories provide a self-assessment on current professional development and workforce activities and describe their goals for the upcoming Biennium.

For purposes of this section, States and Territories will respond according to five key elements for workforce systems:

- 1) Core Knowledge and Competencies
- 2) Career Pathways (or Career Lattice)
- 3) Professional Development Capacity
- 4) Access to Professional Development
- 5) Compensation, Benefits and Workforce Conditions

a) Describe which entities are involved in planning and administering the activities in Section 3.4, including State/Territory entities and local or community level entities.

DCD, CCR &R, Higher Ed, Smart Start, More at Four (OEL), Head Start, Child Care Health Consultants and NC Institute for Child Development Professionals

3.4.1 Workforce Element 1 - Core Knowledge and Competencies

Definition – For purposes of this section, core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) refers to the expectations for what the workforce should know (content) and be able to do (skills) in their role working with and/or on behalf of children and their families. These CKCs provide a foundation for professional development design (including instructional practices) and other quality improvement efforts.

a) Has the State/Territory developed core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) for practitioners working with and/or on behalf of children?

- Yes (Through the Community College System)
- No, the State/Territory has not developed core knowledge and competencies. Skip to question 3.4.2.
- Other. Describe

If yes, insert web addresses, where possible:

b) Check which of the following teaching and learning topics, if any, are covered in the CKCs.

- Child growth, development and learning
- Health, nutrition, and safety
- Learning environment and curriculum
- Interactions with children
- Family and community relationships
- Professionalism and leadership
- Observation and assessment
- Program planning and management
- Diversity
- Other. Describe
- Inclusion and working with children with special needs
- None

c) Are the CKCs incorporated into other parts of the child care system? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory incorporates its CKCs into other parts of the child care system.

- To define the content of training required to meet licensing requirements
- To define the content of training required for program quality improvement standards (as reported in section 3.3)
- To define the content of training required career lattice or credential
- To correspond to the early learning guidelines
- To define curriculum and degree requirements at institutions of higher education
- Other. Describe
- None

d) Are the CKCs aligned with other State/Territory or national standards? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory aligns its CKCs with other standards.

- Cross-walked with the Child Development Associate (CDA) competencies
- Cross-walked with national teacher preparation standards (e.g., NAEYC standards for early childhood professional preparation, National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, Head Start SOLAR staff skills indicators)
- Cross-walked with apprenticeship competencies
- Other. Describe
- None

e) Check for which roles, if any, the State/Territory developed supplemental or specialized competencies.

- Staff working directly with children in centers, including aides, assistants, teachers, master teachers. Describe Specialized competencies are embedded in the Infant-Toddler Certificate, the North Carolina Early Childhood Credential, the North Carolina School Age Credential, and the Head Start CDA Credential.
- Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and assistants. Describe Specialized competencies are embedded in the North Carolina Family Child Care Home (FCCH) Credential.
- Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors). Describe Specialized competencies are embedded in the Administration Credential.
- Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches,

consultants, home visitors, etc.). Describe Each special quality improvement project has its own set of required competencies for its TA providers.

Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty). Describe _____

Other. Describe _____

None

f) Check if the State/Territory has developed any supplemental or specialized competencies for practitioners/providers working with the following ages.

Birth-to-three

Three-to-five

Five and older

Other. Describe _____

None

3.4.2 Workforce Element 2 - Career Pathways

Definition – For purposes of this section, career pathways (or career lattice) defines the options and sequence of qualifications and ongoing professional development to work with children. Career pathways assist professionals in understanding their career options and identify steps for advancement for the workforce recognizing and rewarding higher levels of preparation and mastery of practice to promote higher quality services for children.

a) Does the State/Territory have a career pathway which defines the sequence of qualifications related to professional development (education, training and technical assistance) and experience required to work with children?

Yes. Describe _____

No, the State/Territory has not developed a career pathway. Skip to question 3.4.3.

Insert web addresses, where possible: _____

b) Check for which roles, if any, the career pathways include qualifications, specializations or credentials.

Staff working directly with children in centers, including aides, assistants, teachers, master teachers. Describe _____

Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and assistants. Describe _____

Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors). Describe _____

- Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches, consultants, home visitors, etc.). Describe _____
- Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty). Describe _____
- Other. Describe _____
- None

c) Does the career pathways (or lattice) include specializations or credentials, if any, for working with any of the following children?

- Infants and toddlers
- Preschoolers
- School-age children
- Dual language learners
- Children with disabilities, children with developmental delays, and children with other special needs
- Other. Describe _____
- None

d) In what ways, if any, is the career pathway (or lattice) used?

- Voluntary guide and planning resource
- Required placement for all practitioners and providers working in programs that are licensed or regulated in the State/Territory to serve children birth to 13
- Required placement for all practitioners working in programs that receive public funds to serve children birth to 13
- Required placement for adult educators (i.e., those that provide training, education and/or technical assistance)
- Required placement for participation in scholarship and/or other incentive and support programs
- Required placement for participation in the QRIS or other quality improvement system
- Other. Describe _____
- None

e) Are individuals' qualifications, professional development, and work experience verified prior to placement on the career pathway (or lattice)?

- Yes. If yes, describe _____
- No

3.4.3 Workforce Element 3 – Professional Development Capacity

Definition – For purposes of this section, professional development incorporates higher education, training and technical assistance. Higher education capacity refers to capability of the higher education system to meet the needs of the diverse workforce including the provision of content that addresses

the full range of development and needs of children. Training and technical assistance capacity refers to capability of the training and technical assistance system to meet the needs of the diverse workforce including the provision of content that addresses the full range of development and needs of children.

a) Has the State/Territory assessed the availability of degree programs in early-childhood education, school-age care or youth development, and related fields in the State/Territory (e.g., both physical location and distance-based, accessibility to practitioners, etc.)?

Yes. If yes, describe

Through collaboration with higher education systems in NC, DCD has determined that degrees programs are available to practitioners statewide either in person or via long distance learning.
www.ncicdp.org

No

b) Has the State/Territory assessed the availability of early-childhood and school-age and related training and technical assistance programs in the State/Territory (e.g., both physical location and distance-based, degree level, etc.)?

Yes. If yes, describe

Through the CCR &R System; Smart Start & More at Four; Cooperative Extension; and Child Care Health Consultants project, DCD assures training and TA availability to practitioners in all 100 counties across the state.

No

c) What quality assurance mechanisms, if any, are in place for the degree programs and courses offered by the State/Territory institutions?

Standards set by the institution

Standards set by the State/Territory higher education board

Standards set by program accreditors

Other. Describe

None

d) What quality assurance mechanisms, if any, are in place for the training and technical assistance programs offered by the State/Territory?

Training approval process. Describe Training can be delivered via "exempt" agencies, (colleges/ universities, government agencies, state/ national professional organizations) with annual approval from DCD of the training plan. Independent trainings require comprehensive approval by DCD.

Trainer approval process. Describe Same as above.

Training and/or technical assistance evaluations. Describe For Training and TA funded by the state, participant evaluations are required.

Other. Describe All training must meet the statutory requirements related to content areas: North Carolina General Statute 110-91(11).

None

e) Does the State/Territory have articulation agreements in place across and within institutions of higher education?

Yes. If yes, describe Individual articulations agreements exist between some institutions of higher ed.

No

f) Does the State/Territory have articulation agreements that translate training and/or technical assistance into higher education credit?

Yes. If yes, describe _____

No

3.4.4 Workforce Element 4 – Access to Professional Development

Definition – For purposes of this section, access to professional development (training, education and technical assistance) refers to the degree to which practitioners are made aware of, and receive supports and assistance to utilize, professional development opportunities.

a) Does the State/Territory have professional development opportunities accessible for professionals in various or all sectors of the early childhood and school-age field?

Yes. If yes, for which sectors?

Child care

Head Start/Early Head Start

Pre-Kindergarten

Public schools

Early intervention/special education

Other. Describe

No

b) Does the State/Territory have a State/Territory-wide, coordinated and easily accessible clearinghouse of information about professional development opportunities available to all members of the early childhood and school-age workforce? Lead Agencies are not required to have a professional development system, but States/Territories may develop such clearinghouses to promote access to professional development opportunities.

- Yes. If yes, describe
 No

Insert web addresses, where possible:

c) What supports, if any, does the State/Territory provide to promote access to training and education activities?

- Scholarships. Describe T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project
 Free training and education. Describe Training through the CCR&R System and Smart Start and Rated License Assessment Project, Child Care Health Consultants, and Regulatory Staff.
 Reimbursement for training and education expenses. Describe _____
 Grants. Describe _____
 Loans. Describe _____
 Loan forgiveness programs. Describe _____
 Substitute pools. Describe _____
 Release time. Describe T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project offers release time.
 Other. Describe _____
 None

d) Does the State/Territory have career advisors for early childhood and school-age practitioners?

- Yes. If yes, describe Early childhood & school age practitioners have access to career advisors through the higher education system; Smart Start & More at Four programs; T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project and Child Care WAGES programs.
 No

e) Does the State/Territory have mentors, coaches, consultants, and/or other specialists available to provide technical assistance to the workforce?

- Yes. If yes, describe Regulatory field staff, Quality Improvement Projects, CCR&R, Smart Start QI and QE staff, Child Care Health Consultants, NCRLAP
 No

3.4.5 Workforce Element 5- Compensation, Benefits and Workforce Conditions

Definition – For purposes of this section, rewards for education and training refers to any financial supports provided to practitioners for participating in and completing education or training or for increasing compensation.

a) Does the State/Territory have a salary or wage scale for various professional roles?

Yes. If yes, describe NC Institute for Child Development Professionals has a schedule of suggested salaries, and the More at Four program has an official salary schedule.
<http://ncicdp.org/projects/resource-library/compensation/salary/>

No

b) Does the State/Territory provide financial rewards for participation in professional development, such as one-time salary bonuses for completing a training or education program?

Yes. If yes, describe The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to child care workers to complete course work in early childhood education and to increase their compensation.
www.childcareservices.org

No

c) Does the State/Territory provide sustained financial support on a periodic, predictable basis, such as annual wage supplements, based on the highest level of training and education achieved?

Yes. If yes, describe The Child Care WAGES® Project provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth-5. The project is designed to provide preschool children more stable relationships with better educated teachers by rewarding teacher education and continuity of care.
www.childcareservices.org

No

d) Does the State/Territory have a program to offer or facilitate benefits (e.g. health insurance coverage, retirement, etc.) to the workforce?

Yes. If yes, describe Through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program, the state provides limited reimbursement for a portion of the cost of health insurance for licensed programs that demonstrate a commitment to high quality professional development for their teaching staff.
www.childcareservices.org

No

3.4.6 Data & Performance Measures on the Child Care Workforce –

What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory currently have access to related to the child care workforce? What, if any, does the State/Territory use for performance measures on professional development and workforce initiatives? The purpose of these questions is for Lead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked, Lead Agencies may choose to describe for whom they access to these data on such as only licensed programs, only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participating in quality improvement systems, or only for certain age groups (infants and toddlers or school-age children).

a) **Data on the child care workforce.** Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

- Data on the size of the child care workforce. Describe (optional) As of March 2011, there were 45,770 professionals working in licensed care.
- Data on the demographic characteristics of practitioners or providers working directly with children. Describe (optional) The TEACH and WAGE\$ programs collect this, but only for their participants.
- Records of individual teachers or caregivers and their qualifications. Describe (optional) The State's Workforce Education database; the Institute for Child Development Professionals' Certification database; & the More at Four program collect this information for their participants.
- Retention rates. Describe (optional) The TEACH and WAGE\$ programs have this information on their participants.
- Records of individual professional development specialists and their qualifications. Describe (optional) _____
- Qualifications of teachers or caregivers linked to the programs in which they teach. Describe (optional) The State's Workforce Education database; the Institute for Child Development Professionals' Certification database; & the More at Four program collect this information for their participants.
- Number of scholarships awarded . Describe (optional) The TEACH program has this information for its participants
- Number of individuals receiving bonuses or other financial rewards or incentives. Describe (optional) data from TEACH and WAGE\$
- Number of credentials and degrees conferred annually. Describe (optional) DCD issues NC Early Childhood, Administration, Family Child Care, and School Age Credentials, so we have data on those.
- Data on T/TA completion or attrition rates. Describe (optional) annual reporting from CCR&R system of unduplicated providers

trained through system.

Data on degree completion or attrition rates. Describe (optional)

Other. Describe Currently have a contract with a consulting company to develop the requirements needed to create a system.

None

Definition– For purposes of this section, a workforce data system refers to a system, such as a workforce registry, that tracks the size and characteristics of the child care workforce, including longitudinal data to monitor changes over time. The data system also can produce records to validate and verify qualifications or ongoing professional development for licensing, accreditation, QRIS, wage incentives, and credentials.

b) Does the State/Territory have a workforce data system, such as a workforce registry, which tracks workforce demographics, compensation, and qualifications and ongoing professional development for practitioners working with children birth to age 13?

Yes.

b-1) If yes, which roles are included in the workforce data system? For each role checked, indicate in your description whether participation is voluntary or mandatory.

Staff working directly with children in centers, including aides, assistants, teachers, master teachers.

Describe _____

Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and assistants.

Describe _____

Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors). Describe _____

Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches, consultants, home visitors, etc.). Describe _____

Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty). Describe _____

Other. Describe

The Division of Child Development has a contract with a Consultant Company to develop the requirements needed to create a system.

None

b-2) Does the workforce data system apply to:

all practitioners working in programs that are licensed or regulated by the State/Territory to serve children birth to 13?

all practitioners working in programs that receive public funds to serve children birth to age 13?

No

- c) **Performance measurement.** What, if any, performance measures does the State/Territory use related to its workforce and professional development systems?

The state has annual performance measures related to the number of participants in the T.E.A.C.H and WAGES programs and the number of child care professionals accessing training and TA through the CCR&R and Community College systems.

- d) **Evaluation.** What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to its workforce and professional development systems?

Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

Subject matter experts work with each project and look at their progress toward outcomes throughout the year, as part of a formative evaluation process.

In addition, DCD Professional Development and QRIS Advisory Committees will be evaluating various components of the early care and education system in order to make recommendations to DCD for improvements, enhancements and etc.

3.4.7 Goals for the next Biennium - What are the State/Territory's goals for the building the professional development system and improving conditions for the workforce in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make across the five key elements for the workforce and professional development system described above?

Goals: Formalizing a career lattice; building a web-based portal to house & connect workforce, regulatory, & PD data (including clearinghouse for PD opportunities across state).

The Division of Child Development's goals for its professional development system for the coming biennium include formalizing a career lattice; and building a web-based portal to house and connect workforce, regulatory, and professional development data (including a clearinghouse for PD opportunities across the state).

In terms of other progress related to the five key elements for the workforce and professional system, DCD's goal is to provide education-based salary supplements to 6,600 child care providers through the Child Care WAGES® program; to provide scholarships to 4,395 child care professionals through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project ; and to facilitate access to health insurance for 2,400 child care professionals through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program.

DRAFT