



**CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN
FOR OKLAHOMA FFY 2008-2009**

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/07 – 9/30/09. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

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

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 165 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.

(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 06/30/2009)

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**PART 1
ADMINISTRATION**

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 Lead Agency Information (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency: **Oklahoma Department of Human Services**
Address of Lead Agency: **P.O. Box 25352**
Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: **Howard H. Hendrick, Director**
Phone Number: **405-521-3646**
Fax Number: **405-521-6458**
E-Mail Address: **Howard.Hendrick@okdhs.org**
Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): **www.okdhs.org**

1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name of the State Child Care Contact (CCDF): **Mark Lewis**
Title of State Child Care Contact: **Director of Child Care Services**
Address: **P.O. Box 25352; Oklahoma City, OK 73125**
Phone Number: **405-521-3561**
Fax Number: **405-522-2564**
E-Mail Address: **Mark.Lewis@okdhs.org**
Phone Number for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any): **405-521-3931**
Web Address for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any): **http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/**

1.3 Estimated Funding

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. (§98.13(a))

State Appropriated Funds: \$25,044,582
CCDF: \$75,440,779
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: \$31,817,778
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: \$31,608,625
State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: \$10,630,233
State Matching Funds: \$9,573,754

Total Funds Available: **\$184,115,751**

1.4 Estimated Administration Cost

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of Federal CCDF and State Matching Funds will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): **\$5,725,655** (**4.9%**). (658E(c) (3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

1.5 Administration of the Program

Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

- Yes.
- No. If no, use the table below to **identify** the name and type of agency that delivers services and activities. (If the Lead Agency performs the task, mark “n/a” in the box under “Agency.” If more than one agency performs the task, identify all agencies in the box under “Agency,” and **indicate** in the box to the right whether each is a non-government entity.)

Service/Activity	Agency	Non-Government Entity (see Guidance for definition)	
Determines individual eligibility:			
a) TANF families		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
b) Non-TANF families		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Assists parents in locating care		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Makes the provider payment		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Quality activities		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If the Lead Agency uses outside agencies to deliver services and activities, **describe** how the Lead Agency maintains overall control.

1.6 Use of Private Donated Funds

Will the Lead Agency use private funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2)?

- Yes. If yes, are those funds:
 Donated directly to the State?
 Donated to a separate entity or entities designated to receive private donated funds?

How many entities are designated to receive private donated fund? _____

Provide information below for each entity:

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Type:

- No.

1.7 Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children

- 1.7.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

- Yes, and:

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

(20 %) Estimated percentage of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.(Not to exceed 20%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following **describes** how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

School districts are encouraged to either provide full day services or collaborate with child care to meet the needs of working parents.

- No.

- 1.7.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

- Yes, and

(20%) Estimated percentage of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 30%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following **describes** how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

The OKDHS Division of Child Care and the Oklahoma Department of Education have a close working relationship and share a common commitment to serving families with high quality care and education for four year olds. The State Superintendent for Public Instruction and the assistant superintendent consistently urge school districts to collaborate with child care and Head Start to provide full-day, full-year services. In some districts, state-funded Pre-K teachers teach at licensed child care centers and provide mentoring and consultation to the other teachers. In other districts, state Pre-K funding is provided contractually to the child care provider. Approximately 34,375 children attended Pre-K in the 2006-2007 school year with 17,015 of these children attending full day. Many of these children are able to access after-school programs at the school or in their community.

No.

- 1.7.3 If the State answered yes to 1.7.1 or 1.7.2, the following **describes** State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))
School districts are encouraged to either provide full day services or collaborate with child care to meet the needs of working parents.

1.8 Improper Payments

1.8.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?

Improper payments are those which are not correct with respect to the care authorized, age of the child, star status "quality level" of the provider, geographic rate area or payment rate for the care provided. The family must also meet the "need factor" in order to receive proper child care benefits.

1.8.2 Has your State implemented strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce and/or collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)

Yes, and these strategies are:

OKDHS implemented an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system. This is a time and attendance tracking, card swipe entry system which also makes weekly payments electronically into the provider's financial institution account.

OKDHS requires all licensed providers who wish to receive payment from OKDHS on behalf of eligible families to have an approved Child Care Provider Contract. The provider is required to attend training regarding the requirements of the contract, EBT payment requirements and processes, and other child care provider issues prior to being given the opportunity to formalize a contract with OKDHS.

All child care subsidy applicants are required to attend training before being issued an EBT card for use at child care facilities.

The Office of the Inspector General staff audit providers both on a referral/complaint basis and on a random-sample basis. These audits determine the correctness of the payments made via the EBT system and the swipe entries made by clients with their Access Oklahoma magnetic cards for child care.

When OKDHS staff discovers a client overpayment notice is given to the Overpayment Section in the Family Support Services Division to establish and collect the overpayment.

Provider overpayments are processed by the Division of Finance and overpayments are re-couped from payments owed to providers.

The Oklahoma State Auditor conducts the Single State Audit including an audit of this program and makes recommendations based on findings.

- No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
- Yes, and these planned strategies are:
- No.

PART 2
DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

2.1 Consultation and Coordination

2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *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)). **Indicate** the entities with which the Lead Agency has consulted or coordinated (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in the following table.

Consultation involves the meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).

Coordination involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development service delivery, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children’s emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (6) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	Consultation in Development of the Plan	Coordination with Service Delivery
Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Employment services / workforce development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *

OKDHS CHILD CARE SERVICES STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

	Consultation in Development of the Plan	Coordination with Service Delivery
Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for:		
State pre-kindergarten programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head Start programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (See guidance):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* *Required.*

For each box checked above, (a) identify the agency providing the service and (b) describe the consultation and coordination efforts. Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

1. Other Federal, State, local, Tribal, and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services Department of Human Services (OKDHS) currently administers the child care program; the Social Services Block Grant; TANF; Title IV B of the Social Security Act and other child welfare programs, including child abuse and neglect services; and Child Support Enforcement. This assists with providing a seamless consistent child care program in Oklahoma. OKDHS convenes a monthly child care coordinating committee consisting of representatives from each OKDHS division involved with child care (Oklahoma Child Care Services, Planning and Research, Family Support, Field Operations, Finance, Office of Inspector General) to discuss emerging issues and resolve problems.

OKDHS meets regularly with tribal CCDF grantees to assure coordination of services. Tribes utilize the state market rate survey data in setting rates. The four tribes with joint licensing agreements attend policy training with state licensing workers and share subsidy information.

The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act established a public-private partnership to include 16 private sector representatives of which two are parents of children eight (8) years of age or younger and one is a representative of licensed child care providers and 13 public sector representatives. Members include state agency directors from the Department of Human Services, Department of Education, Department of

Health, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Oklahoma Health Care Authority, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Department of Libraries, Commission on Children and Youth, State Department of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Educational Television Authority, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. Current legislation (HB1557) approved in the 2007 legislative session adds the Dean of the College of Human Environmental Sciences at OSU to the OPSR Board as an additional public sector representative and adds a representative of a statewide organization that receives federal child care funds. The work of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) is to create a comprehensive policy structure that connects programs, services, ideas and initiatives for families to insure young children enter school with the necessary skills to succeed. The OPSR will also promote best practices for existing programs, as well as coordinate private and public funds. Branded as Smart Start Oklahoma, there is a network of 16 community initiatives. In addition, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Foundation, a private 501 3(C) organization was established to raise private funds to support the efforts of OPSR and maximize the impact of private dollars to influence early care and education opportunities for Oklahoma's young children.

2. Public Health The Department of Health utilizes the services of immunization field consultants (IFC) to assist OKDHS Licensing Specialists in monitoring compliance with state immunization requirements. The IFC attend child care licensing policy training with licensing staff. A new form was developed that facilitates referrals from licensing staff to the IFC when licensing staff identify problems with immunization records during monitoring visits for licensing requirements compliance. The Department of Health and OKDHS collaborate to staff a Warmline, a toll-free service that offers consultation and resources to child care providers and parents on children's health, behavioral issues, child growth and development, and health and safety information. The Department of Health also participates in joint funding of mental health consultation services that provides on-site consultation to child care centers regarding management of children with challenging behaviors. OKDHS staff consults on the Department of Health State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant and the State Health Department's Immunization Advisory Council.

OKDHS also has an agreement with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for joint funding of community-based mental health professionals that visit and work with child care providers on caring for children with challenging behaviors.

3. Employment services/workforce development OKDHS partners with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission in some counties to offer "one-stop shopping" where staff from both agencies are housed together in

Workforce Oklahoma Centers to assist OKDHS clients in becoming employed.

The Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association delivers presentations to local employers about services available to their employees including free resource and referral services for their employees and the availability of financial assistance to pay for child care. They also assist communities and prospective employers with child care supply data and work with local communities to address supply shortages that impacts a community's ability to recruit new employers and industry.

All parents or needy caretakers who receive cash assistance from OKDHS are required to be engaged in a work activity and must participate for the number of hours weekly that are necessary to move that individual into employment and self-sufficiency. TANF recipients receive child care assistance for approved work activities, job search activities, job readiness activities, and educational services.

4. Public Education The OKDHS Oklahoma Child Care Services and the Oklahoma Department of Education have a close working relationship and share a common commitment to serving families with high quality care and education for four year olds. The State Superintendent for Public Instruction and the assistant superintendent consistently urge school districts to collaborate with child care and Head Start to provide full-day, full-year services. In some districts, state-funded Pre-K teachers teach at licensed child care centers and provide mentoring and consultation to the other teachers. In other districts, state Pre-K funding is provided contractually to the child care provider. During the 2006-2007 school year 34,375 four year old and 1,955 three year old children attended Pre-K during the school day. Forty nine percent of four year old children and fifty nine percent of three year old children attended a full day program with the opportunity to access after-school programs for the remainder of the day. DOE and OKDHS co-chair the implementation and dissemination of the early learning guidelines for 3-5 year old children in early childhood settings.

OKDHS Oklahoma Child Care Services provides support and cooperation to the Department of Education in managing the 21st Century Community Learning program. Consultation is provided on licensing of school-age programs funded by 21st Century Community Learning program grantees. OKDHS licensing representatives provide information about the Child and Adult Care Food Program, administered by the Department of Education, to licensed facilities. Programs are encouraged to participate to assure children in licensed care receive balanced and nutritious meals.

5. TANF OKDHS transfers TANF funds to the CCDF program and reimburses providers for child care services for TANF clients with TANF funds. All parents or needy caretakers who receive cash assistance from OKDHS are required to be engaged in a work activity and must participate

for the number of hours weekly that are necessary to move that individual into employment and self-sufficiency. TANF recipients receive child care assistance for approved work activities, job search activities, job readiness activities, and educational services.

6. Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations OKDHS staff work cooperatively and meet regularly with the Oklahoma Tribal State Child Care Network to share information on licensing, quality initiatives and subsidy reimbursement programs. The Oklahoma Tribal State Network represents the Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association, which is composed of the 37 federally recognized Indian Tribes who receive CCDF allocations. OKDHS has cooperative licensing agreements with four tribes (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Muscogee Creek). Oklahoma child care licensing requirements include recognition of and coordination with the licensing units representing these four tribes for acceptance of each other's monitoring visits. Tribal licensing staffs attend state sponsored training, and subsidy information is shared to insure improper payments do not occur. OKDHS contracts with the Cherokee Tribe to provide resource and referral services as part of the state resource and referral network.

7. Representatives of local government Local governments receive notice of the Public Hearing and are invited to comment on the State Plan. Additionally, staff are encouraged to meet with local officials to identify issues related to child care in their local communities or municipalities.

8. State/Tribal agencies responsible for:

- **Coordination with the state Pre-K and Head Start programs to encourage collaborations with child care and shared professional development opportunities. OKDHS Oklahoma Child Care Services staff serve on a the Oklahoma Head Start Collaboration Project Advisory Board.**

If you have prepared an emergency preparedness plan related to your child care and early childhood development services, attach it as **Attachment 2.1.1**. While OKDHS Oklahoma Child Care Services has convened planning meetings to discuss development of a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan for the state, no plan has been drafted as yet. Licensing requirements include emergency preparedness as a component under safety and sanitation rules.

The state of Oklahoma has an Emergency Operations Plan; see Attachment 2.1.1(a). Each OKDHS County office is required to have an Emergency Operations Plan as well; see Attachment 2.1.1(b) for a link to the master template.

- 2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. *Good Start, Grow Smart* encourages States to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood

programs. **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area. **Note: 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 is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted.
The draft is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented.
The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- Other (describe): Early Learning guidelines (ELG) were developed cooperatively and adopted by the State Board of Education for Pre-K programs. The Division of Child Care is coordinating a committee to address the core competencies required by early childhood teachers to implement ELG in child care and Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. See Attachment 5.2.1, Early Learning Guidelines.**

Describe the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan. **Oklahoma focused professional development initiatives to insure efforts of the different state early childhood entities support implementation of ELG in early childhood classrooms representing child care, public school Pre-K, tribal programs, and Head Start. OKDHS leads an alignment and implementation committee composed of representatives of 2 & 4-year colleges, Career Tech, Department of Education, Head Start, Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Oklahoma Child Care Services, and the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development. This group has worked since early 2006 developing standards for eight core knowledge areas to be embedded into the trainer approval system, training courses and linked to the developed early learning guidelines. A group has been meeting monthly since completing the Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) with the dual purpose of implementing the ELG across early childhood programs and aligning the standards with professional development needs of the workforce. Activities include:**

- **Developing core competencies aligned with ELG standards (in process). The committee plan 8 core competencies, and they have completed 5.**
- **Developed training for early childhood teachers (Creating Effective Learning Environments, an overview of how to utilize the guidelines and a prerequisite to the ELG training so providers know what an effective learning environment looks like prior to implementing the ELG). Seven pilot sessions of 20 hours each were delivered during FY06 for providers and licensing specialists. During FY07 regional resource and referral agency staff received training in both curriculums. Four sessions of 20**

hours each of **Creating Effective Learning Environments** and three sessions of **Early Learning Guidelines** were offered for child care providers. There is also a plan to deliver “**Training of Trainers**” for **Creating Effective Learning Environments** during FY08.

- **Develop and deliver training on implementing the ELG in the classroom**
- **Develop assessment tools (Guiding Principles for Early Learning Guidelines, which includes domains or curriculum content and standards, Indicators of Child’s Progress, and Teacher’s Strategies/Activities). A group of directors were selected to receive training on focused portfolios.**

Indicate whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination. **OKDHS administers the CCDF, TANF and SSBG programs and coordinate these funding streams for child care. Other funding streams include Oklahoma Department of Education Pre-K and Head Start. OKDHS cooperates with both entities to provide full day care with subsidy payments authorized for care outside of normal school hours.**

Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) is a public private partnership. Among board members are state agency heads representing OKDHS (Howard Hendrick), Department of Education (Sandy Garrett), and the Head Start Collaboration Office (Kay Floyd). OPSR developed a strategic plan for coordinating services that includes child care, health care, school readiness and parent education. See section 2.1.1.

Describe the results or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children. **Coordination of programs and funding streams within OKDHS and through cooperation with partners has resulted in improved services for families and better utilization of resources. Professional development activities are coordinated with other programs and agencies through monthly child care partner meetings hosted by Center for Early Childhood Professional Development. The newly formed Early Education Professional Development Committee is coordinating professional development planning efforts (see 5.2.5). OKDHS is facilitating the combined ELG alignment and implementation committees to ensure effective coordination. Outcomes for children will be monitored with the development and tracking of benchmarks by the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness.**

Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

Continued coordination will be achieved by a variety of communication strategies. OKDHS administered programs (CCDF, TANF, SSBG) are coordinated by the Child Care Coordinating Committee. Stakeholders representing the early childhood professional development community continue coordination activities described in 2.1.1. No changes are anticipated in the plan.

2.2 Public Hearing Process

Describe the Statewide 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 must provide:

Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing: **February 13, 2007**

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing: **Press release, notice to partner agencies, notice to all licensed child care facilities.**

Date(s) of public hearing(s): **May 15, 2007**

Hearing site(s): **Oklahoma History Center
2401 N. Laird Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK**

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s): **Posted on the OKDHS/DCC website, www.OKDHS.org/programsandservices/cc/ with links to the plan on Center for Early Childhood Professional Development and Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association web sites, copies available through the local resource and referral agencies, local OKDHS county offices, and the Central OKDHS office.**

A brief summary of the public comments from this process is included as **Attachment 2.2.**

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

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?

Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the results or expected results.

The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, a private-public partnership developed a strategic plan with technical assistance from the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center and the Build Initiative. Proposed strategies are: 1) enact a strong public policy promoting early childhood care and education; 2) create a statewide public-private early childhood partnership; 3) mobilize communities to provide environments that support children and families; 4) increase awareness through a public engagement campaign. OPSR currently works with 16 Oklahoma Smart Start Communities serving a total of 22 counties across the state. These

coalitions are engaging communities to support parents as they nurture, teach and provide for their children. Through active collaboration, they are removing obstacles, closing gaps and bringing state, federal and private resources to families with young children.

No.

PART 3
CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

3.1 Description of Child Care Services

3.1.1 Certificate Payment System

Describe the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

- (1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));
- (2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2)) and
- (3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the proportion of \$98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts, and explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (98.30(a) & (b)) This may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services.

Attach a copy of your eligibility worker's manual, policy handbook, or other printed guidelines for administering the child care subsidy program as **Attachment 3.1.1**. If these materials are available on the web, the State may provide the appropriate Web site address in lieu of attaching hard copies to the Plan.

<http://www.okdhs.org/library/policy/oac340/040/>

Note: Eligibility worker's manuals, policy handbooks, or other printed guidelines for administering a child care subsidy program will be used for reference purposes only. Documents provided by Lead Agencies pursuant to this section will not be uniformly or comprehensively reviewed and will not be considered part of the Plan. All information required to be part of the Plan must continue to be set forth in the Plan.

- 1) **A request for a child care benefit may be taken at any OKDHS human service center office, an outreach location or by a trained volunteer at a designated location. There is at least one OKDHS office in each county of the state. A request becomes an application after all necessary verification has been provided. A plan of service is developed with the family which establishes the need for child care, income eligibility of the applicant, the time and days child care will be needed, a back up plan for care when the child cannot go to the authorized provider, whether the applicant needs to pursue potential income, and a discussion of any other social service needs of the family. At request, if a client states he/she cannot start a job or is in danger of losing a job because of child care problems, the client can be approved for child care for up to 30 calendar days based on his or her statement regarding need and income if such verification is beyond the client's control to provide. The client must then provide verification of his**

/her situation within the 30 days before additional child care services will be approved. Upon determination that a family is eligible for a child care benefit, the worker authorizes child care and the child care certificate is issued. (See Attachment 3.1.1 for copy of authorization given to parent). The earliest date a client is approved for child care is the date all verification is received by the county office and the interview is completed. The parent and chosen provider are automatically issued a notice of the family's eligibility, the number of days each child is authorized, whether care is full or part-time and the amount of the family share co-payment.

An electronic benefits transfer (EBT) system is used statewide in Oklahoma. Payment for service is based on the time and attendance information that the parent documents by swiping his or her EBT card through the point of service (POS) machine on a daily basis. If an adjustment is needed to the electronic payment, OKDHS staff or the provider completes a manual claim form. Unless extenuating circumstances beyond the client's and/or provider's control exist, the parent must record attendance on the POS machine, even if the swipe is denied, before OKDHS will pay an adjustment to the provider.

Often parents have already selected a facility when they request a child care benefit. If, however, a parent has not selected a facility, the OKDHS worker provides the parent with a listing of out-of-home licensed facilities in the area and refers the parent to the area child care resource and referral agency for referrals. The worker may also describe the process to approve an in-home provider if an appropriate out-of-home provider is not available. The worker explains that the first day child care can be approved is the day all verification is provided, including the name of the child care provider. If the client starts using care prior to giving the worker the name of that provider, OKDHS will not approve care for those days. The worker advises the parent that he or she cannot select a one star center if care is available at a one star plus, two star or three star center in the community or certain exception criteria are met. OKDHS workers are restricted from making comments to parents about the quality of a particular facility other than describing the increased quality indicators a provider must meet before a higher "Star" status is given and giving them a pamphlet that gives information about quality child care. The worker recommends that the parent view the selected provider's licensing record. The choice of where to place the child is always the parent's as long as the facility is licensed and contracted with OKDHS or the in-home provider is registered and approved to receive subsidy payments by a signed agreement with OKDHS.

The parent is also advised that OKDHS will only approve one provider per day for the same child.

The parent can change providers at any time. When this happens, a new authorization is entered in the system and a notice of termination is sent to the previous facility.

(2) Oklahoma operates exclusively through a certificate system that began in 1965 and broadened in 1975. A certificate for child care is issued after a parent or caretaker chooses a provider. (See Attachment 3.1.1) Parents and caretakers can select from all licensed and contracted providers in the state with some exceptions. Parents cannot choose the following child care providers:

- A child care facility in which the client or his or her spouse has an ownership interest;
- A child care home in which the child resides;
- A child care home in which the client also works during the hours his or her child(ren) is in care unless an approval is obtained from the Family Support Services Division (FSSD), Child Care Section;
- A provider who does not allow parental access during the hours the provider is caring for children;
- A provider who is receiving state or federal funds, such as Head Start, Early Head Start or public schools unless:
 - All parents are charged a fee for the hours subsidy payment is requested and the program is offering extended day or full year services. Programs operating only during typical school or Head Start hours are not eligible.
- A provider caring for a school age child during the regular school day when such student could be attending a public or private school during those hours;
- A child care center which is a one star facility if care is available at a one star plus, two, or three star center in the community or one of the special exception criteria are met. Special exception criteria are:
 - The child was already approved for care at this one star center prior to January 1, 2003. The child can remain at this facility unless the child stops attending there for more than 30 days. The child can also be approved at the same facility again if the only reason the child did not attend for more than 30 days was because of a school break or due to circumstances beyond the control of the family such as illness of the child.
 - Care is requested for a child living in the same home as a child already approved for care at the same one star child care center.
 - The parent or guardian demonstrates that they do not have another child care option that meets the family's needs.

Parents can be given lists of contracted providers from their worker using the child care locator database on the Division of Child Care's web site. They can also be referred to the licensing specialist or Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) if they have not already selected a provider. Parents locate their own in-home provider.

3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

Yes, and the following **describes** the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

No.

3.1.3 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are: (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv))

No.

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

Yes.

No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care

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

These rates are provided as **Attachment 3.2A**.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of **7/1/07**.

Provide a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: **June 2007** . (§98.43(b)(2))

- A copy of the **Market Rate Survey instrument** and a **summary of the results** of the survey are provided as **Attachment 3.2B**. At a minimum, this summary should include a description of the sample population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings (See **Guidance for additional information**.)
- Does the Lead Agency use its **current** Market Rate Survey (a survey completed within the allowable time period –10/1/05 -9/30/07) to set payment rates?

- Yes.
- No.

At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set? If you do not use your current Market Rate Survey to set your rate ceilings or your percentile varies across categories of care (e.g., type of setting, region, age of children), describe and provide the range of variation in relation to your current survey. (See **Guidance for additional information**.)

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services utilizes the results of the market rate survey as a primary guide, or source of data to establish reimbursement rates. Due to limited resources, the market rate survey has not been used to independently establish reimbursement rates paid to providers. Available resources, demand for infant and toddler care, and incentives for higher quality care are some of the factors considered when establishing reimbursement rates. The results of the 2007 market rate survey are being evaluated to determine the needs for rate adjustments based upon changes in the market rates and the impact of the increase in minimum wage.

Current reimbursement rates are based upon the 2005 market rate survey. OKDHS has established 144 independent reimbursement rates based upon the age of the child, the setting, full or part time, the geographic location and Star status of the provider. (See Attachment 3.2.B for complete rate summary and market rate percentages) OKDHS utilizes a quality rating system approving Star levels at 1 Star, 1 Star Plus, 2 Star and 3 Star. Nearly 90% of all children receiving subsidized care are enrolled in 2 or 3 Star facilities.

Percent of children receiving subsidized care in 2 Star facilities = 72%
Percent of children receiving subsidized care in 3 Star facilities = 16%

2007 Market Rate Percentiles

	Metro Centers	Metro Homes
2 Star	55% to 70%	63% to 80%
3 Star	38% to 75%	No market established (46 homes statewide)

	Standard Centers	Standard Homes
2 Star	58% to 70%	32% to 44%
3 Star	45% to 77%	No market established (46 homes statewide)

- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full range of providers based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., describe the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

Reimbursement rates are established with the intent of maximizing the availability of care across all provider types whether home or center, faith-based, for profit or employer subsidized caregiver. In addition, OKDHS has established reimbursement rates within the quality ratings to ensure equal access across the full range of providers.

After completion of the 2005 market rate survey, OKDHS adjusted rates to approach or exceed the 75th percentile for all care provided to children birth through three in 2 and 3 Star facilities. Since our previous rate increase, the overall market rate increases from inflation appear to have eroded the ability to meet the desired level of the 75th percentile as documented by the 2007 survey.

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Metro Rate Counties

The 2007 Market Rate Survey indicates gaps between the measured market rate percentiles for 2 and 3 Star Metro Centers in all age groups except school age from the desired level of the 75th percentile.

Conversely, rates for 2 Star Metro Homes were above the 75th percentile for infants and toddlers and twos and threes, slightly below for fours and fives, and somewhat below for school age children. Due to insufficient numbers of 3 Star Homes statistically significant results could not be obtained.

Standard Rate Counties

Standard rate counties exhibited larger deviances from the 75th percentile. Only the 2 Star infant rate at the 70th percentile approached

the desired access level for centers, and only the 3 Star rate for twos and threes exceeded the 75th percentile.

OKDHS is currently reviewing county level data to determine which counties are included in the Metro designation and which are considered Standard rate counties. OKDHS plans a rate increase based on the Market Rate Survey, but current funds are not sufficient to raise all rate categories to the 75th percentile. OKDHS is also considering the impact of the minimum wage increase on the child care industry in Oklahoma and will factor this into the planned rate increase. OKDHS has requested \$12.6M in state funds to raise rates to the 75th percentile, \$4.8M to fund the FY07 minimum wage increase, and \$8.6M to fund the FY08 minimum wage increase.

- Does the Lead Agency consider any additional facts to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access? (§98.43(d))

Yes. If, yes, **describe.**

No.

- Does the State have a tiered reimbursement system (higher rates for child care centers and family child care homes that achieve one or more levels of quality beyond basic licensing requirements)?

Yes. If yes, **describe: The “Reaching for the Stars” tiered reimbursement was implemented February, 1998 to provide higher payment rates for providers meeting additional quality criteria. Rates vary based upon age of the child, child care setting, geographic area and the facility’s Star status. Additional information can be found at www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc.**

No.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

3.3.1 Age Eligibility

Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is 18.

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No.

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

Yes, and the upper age is 18

No.

3.3.2 Income Eligibility

Complete columns (a) and (b) in the matrix below. 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, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
			(c) \$/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	\$2,303	\$1,957	N/A	N/A
2	\$3,011	\$2,560	\$2,425	81%
3	\$3,720	\$3,162	\$2,925	79%
4	\$4,428	\$3,764	\$3,625	82%
5	\$5,137	\$4,366	\$3,625	71%

If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, **indicate** the year used:

If applicable, indicate the date on which the eligibility limits detailed in column (c) became or will become effective: **7/1/07**

How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Describe and/or include information as **Attachment 3.3.2**. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

The OKDHS Appendix C-4 defines adjusted monthly income as “Gross earned plus unearned income, minus legally-binding child support paid, rounded to the nearest dollar.”

- Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income (for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments)?

Yes. If yes, **describe** what type of income is deducted or excluded from total family income.

Verified legally-binding child support paid by a household member to or for a non-household member is deducted from total family income.

No.

- Is the income of all family members included?

Yes.

No. If no, **describe** whose income is excluded for purposes of eligibility determination.

Earnings of children. Earnings of an individual 17 years of age and younger who is considered a child in the case is excluded as long as the child is attending school regularly. This exclusion continues to apply during temporary interruptions in school attendance due to semester or vacation breaks, provided the child's enrollment resumes following the break.

3.3.3 Eligibility Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

Does the State choose to provide child care to children in protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

Yes.

No.

Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

Yes.

No.

Not applicable. CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.

Does the State choose 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? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)

No.

3.3.4 Additional Eligibility Conditions

Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

Yes, and the additional eligibility conditions are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

No.

3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families

3.4.1 Complete the table below regarding eligibility conditions and priority rules. For columns (a) through (d), check box if reply is “Yes”. Leave blank if “No”. Complete column (e) if you check column (d).

Eligibility Category	(a) Guarantee subsidy eligibility	(b) Give priority over other CCDF- eligible families	(c) Same priority as other CCDF- eligible families	(d) Is there a time limit on guarantee or priority?	(e) How long is time limit?
Children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Children in families with very low incomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families <u>receiving</u> Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Families transitioning from TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families at risk of becoming dependent on TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3.4.2 **Describe** how the State prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs and (b) children in families with very low incomes. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

OKDHS serves all applicants who meet the CCDF priorities of children and families with very low income and children with special needs. Very low income is defined as income below the allowable income listed on the OKDHS Appendix C-4, Child Care Eligibility/Rates Schedule.

3.4.3 **Describe** how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) 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))

TANF applicants are eligible for 20 days of child care to look for work while they are in application status with no co-payment. Active TANF recipients are eligible for child care with no co-payment if they are involved in TANF work activities. Families who either do not apply or are not eligible for TANF can receive child care assistance for work or school activities depending on their income. Families can also receive child care for sleep time during the day after working night hours when a feasible alternative is used at no cost to the Department during the night working hours.

Families are eligible for purchase of child care services if they are state residents; all children needing child care are citizens or qualified aliens; they meet income guidelines on the OKDHS Appendix C-4 Child Care Eligibility/Rates Schedule; and they need child care to work or participate in an approved training or educational program. Child care may be approved for job search for a maximum of 30 days when a recipient who has received a child care benefit for at least 30 days loses employment or successfully completes a formal education or training program and requests child care assistance to look for a job. Child care is also available in those instances when it is purchased as part of a plan of service for a child who is, or is in danger of becoming neglected, abused or exploited. A co-payment may or may not be assessed for families receiving protective child care depending on the family circumstances.

When both parents attend school, reimbursement for child care services is not approved unless one or both are high school students. Child care is never approved for master's or doctorate level education.

A state resident is anyone who lives within the boundaries of the State of Oklahoma. It does not include persons who live in another state and work or use a child care facility in Oklahoma.

All potential sources of income such as child support, OASDI, SSI, and veteran's benefits are explored with the parent.

If one or more of the children's parents is absent from the home, the client on the case must pursue child support through the OKDHS Child Support Enforcement Division unless a good cause reason to not do so exists.

In order for reimbursement to be made for child care services in Oklahoma, services must be provided in a licensed, registered or approved facility in accordance with state law and have a valid contract with OKDHS. The facility must further agree to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and agree to provide unlimited access to parents.

Oklahoma uses a tiered reimbursement system to pay child care providers based on quality criteria. Child care clients cannot choose a one star center provider unless certain exception criteria are met.

3.4.4 Has the Lead Agency established additional priority rules that are not reflected in the table completed for Section 3.4.1? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

Yes, and the additional priority rules are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

No.

3.4.5 Does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?

Yes.

No.

3.4.6 Does the Lead Agency maintain a waiting list?

Yes. If yes, for what populations? Is the waiting list maintained at the State level? Are certain populations given priority for services, and if so, which populations? What methods are employed to keep the list current?

No.

3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided as **Attachment 3.5.1**.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of **7/1/07**_____.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

Yes, and the following **describes** any additional factors that will be used:
A family's contribution is also determined based on number of children in care.

No.

3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

Yes.

No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) are provided as **Attachment 3.5.2**.

3.5.3 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)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: **\$1,431 per month**.

The Lead Agency must **select ONE** of these options:

ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.

ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.

SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The following describes these families:

Families who meet the income and family size guidelines listed on OKDHS Appendix C-4 with a zero co-payment. The maximum monthly income for

all family sizes with a zero co-payment is \$850.00 per month. Families in need of protective child care services may have all or part of their co-payment waived. Children in foster care eligible for child care services are not assessed a co-payment.

3.5.4 Does the State allow providers to charge parents the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate?

Yes.

No.

3.5.5 The following is an explanation of how the copayments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) were determined to be affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))
The amount of the co-payment ranges from 0% to 17.28% of the gross monthly income. The client co-payment for families with additional children in care ranges up to \$44 per child. The co-payment for families with six or more children is 80% of the co-payment for families with no more than five members and with the same income and the same number of children in care.

PART 4
PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice

4.1.1 **Describe** the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). At minimum, the description should include:

- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options
- Where/how applications are made
- What documentation parents must provide
- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4
- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

Attach a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program. If the application is available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (application must still be attached to Plan):

1. A. Parents are informed about the child care program in the following manner:

- **Referrals for child care come from OKDHS workers while they are processing requests for other programs such as TANF, Medicaid or Food Stamps.**
- **Private, non-profit Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program staff make many referrals to OKDHS. There are eight agencies that cover the entire state.**
- **OKDHS licensing specialists statewide convey to parents other OKDHS services available.**
- **Child care facilities are another source of many referrals. Posters and pamphlets are available for providers to place in their facilities. Child care providers are notified regularly of any changes in the subsidy program.**
- **Information and an application are available on the OKDHS Internet site for the subsidy program.**
- **OKDHS has several publications about child care which are available in county offices as well as county health departments, libraries, career-tech schools, employment offices, colleges and universities where low-income families visit.**
- **News releases are issued on major program changes.**

- B. When a parent applies for child care, he or she is informed that the range of choices for subsidized child care include licensed and contracted child care centers and homes including faith based providers or in-home providers who are approved to receive subsidy payments by a signed agreement with OKDHS. The parent is given a list of available providers from the worker taking the request, the licensing specialist or local CCR&R staff.**
- 2. A request for child care assistance is usually made at the local human services center office. The parent may also pick up an application form at an outreach location or from the child care provider and bring it or mail it to the local office. A verbal request for child care services can be made over the telephone to a local worker who can then explain processing procedures and either set up a face-to-face interview with the applicant or complete an interview over the telephone and then send the completed application form to the client to sign and return with needed verification. It is also possible for local offices to train volunteers to take child care applications who in turn can send them to the local office. An authorized representative, designated by the applicant, may complete and submit the application for the parent.**
 - 3. Parents must provide documentation of:**
 - Household income**
 - The parent or guardian's need for child care, i.e: Work, training or class schedule, or doctors statement of incapacitation for protective/preventive**
 - If the child is not a U.S. citizen, proof of his/her alien status.**
 - 4. TANF parents are advised of the exceptions to individual penalties as described in 4. 4 when their TANF Work/ Personal Responsibility Agreement is completed.**
 - 5. An application for child care can be approved for no more than 12 months at a time. Reviews may be completed more often depending on client circumstances. Time frames for reviews are not modified because of collaboration efforts with other agencies.**
 - 6. Staff must process child care applications within 2 working days of receiving all required verification necessary to make an eligibility decision. When a client selects a different child care provider than the one approved, staff must process the change within two working days of being advised. A face-to-face interview is not required if it would create hardship for a client. If the client is also receiving Food Stamps and/or Medicaid benefits and is a benefit reporter, the client's review can be completed using a form mailed to the client. In that instance, an interview is not required unless the client is approved for a protective/preventive reason.**

4.1.2 Is the application process different for families receiving TANF?

Yes. If yes, **describe** how the process is different:

No.

4.1.3 The following is a detailed description of how the State ensures parental choice by making sure that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

See 4.1.1: 1.A and B

4.1.4 Does the State conduct activities aimed at families with limited English proficiency to promote access to child care subsidies and reduce barriers to receiving subsidies and accessing child care services?

Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities, including how the State overcomes language barriers with families and providers.

The state has a publication available in Spanish that provides information to families on applying for child care assistance. The child care application is available in Spanish as well as the video families are required to watch regarding the EBT process. Workers can access a telephone translation service during interviews to assist in any language. The Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Agency has a staff member who is available to assist Spanish speaking parents and child care providers. The child care provider handbook is also available in Spanish.

No.

4.2 Records of Parental Complaints

The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32)

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) is subject to the Oklahoma Open Records Act, 51 O.S § 24A.1 et seq, which mandates that public records are open for public inspection unless they are required by law to be kept confidential. All OKDHS records of facilities required to be licensed under 10 O.S. § 401-410 are considered public records and are open and available for public inspection during reasonable hours. The child care facility is required to post the Child Welfare Investigative Summary with findings of “Confirmed” for 120 days

from the completion of the investigation and waivers for personnel who have specifically defined criminal histories for as long as they are employed at the facility. The child care facility is required to maintain an accessible file for parents and prospective customers containing the most recent child care licensing monitoring report; notices to comply, licensing complaints and unconfirmed Child Welfare Investigative Summaries within the past 120 days; and confirmed Child Welfare Investigative Summaries for one year. Information obtained concerning a report of a violation of a licensing requirement is confidential pursuant to 10 O.S. § 406 with the exception of a summary of allegations and findings of an investigation involving a child care facility that does not disclose identities but that permits parents to evaluate the facility. Public viewing may be scheduled in the county OKDHS office or a summary mailed or faxed to an individual. Public viewing of monitoring report summaries is also available at <http://204.87.68.21/childcarefind/>.

4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings

The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State 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))

The child care provider contract states: “Provider agrees to provide unlimited access to the facility by the parent/caretaker during normal business hours of operation in order that the child may be observed in the care setting and/or the care provided may be assessed.” If a complaint is received from a parent that he/she does not have unlimited access to the child, it is investigated. If necessary, the provider’s child care contract could be terminated.

Child care licensing requirements also assure parents are permitted reasonable access to all parts of the child care facility during hours of operation unless the parent’s health or behavior could endanger the health, safety or well being of children in the facility.

4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care

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.

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 Child Care 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. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: **OKDHS.**

- "appropriate child care":
- "reasonable distance":
- "unsuitability of informal child care":
- "affordable child care arrangements":

The above criteria are defined in the following policy:

340:10-2-2. Sanction process

(d) Determination of good cause. All good cause situations are temporary in nature. An individual may have good cause for refusing or failing to participate in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work. The worker determines whether or not good cause exists.

6. An example of good cause is:

(1) appropriate child care for the child(ren) is not available. Appropriate child care is care provided by:

(A) a licensed, contracted child care facility;

(B) an approved in-home caregiver;

(C) a dependable relative who is able and willing to assume responsibility for care and supervision of the child(ren) for a part of the day;

(D) a free or low cost facility, such as a day care, pre-school, or Head Start program operated by a community action agency; or

(E) informal arrangements made by the parent with a neighbor or friend for occasional care;

(2) the custodial parent caring for a child(ren) who has not attained six years of age has demonstrated an inability to obtain needed child care. This is demonstrated by the unavailability:

(A) of appropriate child care within a reasonable distance from the individual's home or work site. A reasonable distance is a distance determined and agreed upon by the parent and the worker and is dependent upon the individual needs of the parent and child(ren);

(B) or unsuitability of informal child care provided by a relative or provided under other arrangements. Unsuitability of informal child care is an arrangement that does not:

(i) afford the child(ren) adequate care and supervision. Supervision of a child(ren) means the function of observing, overseeing, and guiding a child(ren);

(ii) encourage social development or stimulate the child(ren)'s mental capabilities; and

(iii) afford the child(ren) a safe and stable environment that provides for learning opportunities; or

(C) of affordable child care. Affordable child is defined as not exceeding the maximum child care cost as indicated on OKDHS Appendix C-4, Child Care Eligibility/Rates Schedule;

(3) the illness or incapacity of the participant or any household member who cannot give self-care and for whom special care is unavailable. If the illness or incapacity of the participant or any household member does not appear temporary, refer to OAC 340:10-2-8(c)(7), Disability Advocacy Program;

(4) a court-required appearance or incarceration of the participant;

(5) the participant's attendance at parent and teacher conferences;

(6) a family crisis or markedly changed individual or family circumstances;

(7) the unavailability of planned transportation when needed or the inability to arrange for transportation;

(8) the occurrence of inclement weather which prevented the participant, and other persons similarly situated, from traveling to, or participating in, the prescribed activity;

(9) the lack of necessary social services or work activity;

(10) the assignment or job referral does not meet the appropriate criteria as defined in OAC 340:10-2-3 (d);

(11) the refusal to accept major medical services even if such refusal precludes participation in the program;

(12) racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, physical or mental disability, or age discrimination or harassment by an employer or other employees;

(13) a participant is engaged in another work activity that is consistent with the employability plan;

(14) the lack of available treatment in the community for substance abuse or mental health issues affecting the family; or

(15) crisis intervention needed due to domestic violence issues.

PART 5
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF
CHILD CARE

5.1 Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides

- 5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; describes the expected results of the activities and, if the activities have been ongoing, the actual results of the activities. **For the infant and toddler earmark, the State must note in its description of the activities, what is the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds (not to exceed 36 months).**

Infants and toddlers:

1. **Continuation of the Better Baby Care campaign with Department of Human Services, Department of Education, Department of Health, pediatricians, child care community, universities, two year colleges, Resource and Referral, Early Head Start, OPSR, Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy in order to improve and provide visibility to policies that govern the quality of infant-toddler care (0-3 years of age), parent education, family support and family friendly practices in the workforce ;**
2. **Support the OKDHS Research Unit and Resource and Referral agencies' efforts to capture and evaluate data on infant and toddlers (0-3 years of age) and young children regarding supply and demand;**
3. **Provide trained consultants through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development to assess infant and toddler environments in child care facilities utilizing the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale;**
4. **Develop early learning guidelines for infant/toddlers (0-3 years of age);**
5. **Fund infant-toddler training(0-3 years of age) through CECPD;**
6. **Fund an Infant/Toddler Coordinator in the OCCRRA office to provide technical assistance and training to child care providers caring for children 0-3 years of age and place Infant/Toddler specialists in the two metro resource and referral agencies.**

Resource and referral services:

The following services are provided through a contract with the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association and eight sub-contracted community-based resource and referral agencies:

- **Provide resources and support to child care providers including on-site technical assistance to enhance child care center and family child care service quality**

- **Assist parents in locating child care that meets their needs and provide consumer education to parents who contact local resource and referral agencies which includes telephone counseling, mailing of written materials and information posted on agency web sites**
- **Provide outreach to churches, employers, and schools on the need for care in local communities**
- **Support the Smart Start Oklahoma planning programs and offer technical assistance for communities addressing unmet child care needs**
- **Provide accurate and comprehensive information about the child care options in Oklahoma through a centralized database that is updated regularly**
- **Support Spanish speaking families by providing bilingual referral staff**
- **Support Spanish speaking child care staff by providing a full day conference for Spanish speaking providers**
- **Provide health consultants in metro counties and provide technical assistance in other areas through a full time health consultant coordinator in the state office of OCCRRA**
- **Support quality infant toddler programs with specialized training and consultation provided by infant toddler consultants in metro counties and a full time infant toddler specialist in the state office of OCCRRA**

School-age child care:

OKDHS sponsors or participates in a number of initiatives to support and promote quality school-age child care.

- **OKDHS provides training vouchers to support school-age providers obtaining job related training**
- **OKDHS assists with the provision of National Institute on Out of School Time, Quality Advisor Training. A team of Quality Advisors will be trained to provide on-going consultation and technical assistance to school-age programs throughout the state. Training will assist advisors in identifying developmental stages of programs, preparing for site visits, observations of programs, providing assistance, coaching and mentoring, and supporting programs who want to be accredited.**
- **OKDHS assists with the provision of Finance Project's Sustainability Planning for Out-of School Programs. Training is focused on individual programs who are working to create sustainable systems for out-of - school time. The training will assist programs in examining how they currently finance their programs and to offer ideas, strategies, and tools to help them achieve greater sustainability**
- **Provide trained consultants through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development to assess school-age environments in child care facilities utilizing the School-Age Environment Rating Scale**
- **Continue outreach to school districts and communities to address the need for and impact of school-age care, available resources, the licensing law and quality indicators.**

- **Participate in the Oklahoma Afterschool Association to provide coordination of before and after school child care and plan training opportunities for school-age providers**

5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds) during the 1-year period: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008:

\$ 12.1 M (10.4%)

5.1.3 **Check** each activity the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

**OKDHS CHILD CARE SERVICES STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09**

Activity	Check if undertaking/will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if this entity is a non-governmental entity?
Comprehensive consumer education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OCCRRA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OKDHS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	U. of Oklahoma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	**	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to promote inclusive child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OUHSC, Oklahoma State Regents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	***	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that increase parental choice	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

OKDHS CHILD CARE SERVICES STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

Activity	Check if undertaking/will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if this entity is a non-governmental entity?
Other activities that improve the quality of child care (describe below).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse; Oklahoma State Dept. of Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other activities that improve the availability of child care (describe below).	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
(§98.51(a)(1) and (2))			

- * **University of Oklahoma Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD), Career Tech, Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Scholars for Excellence in Child Care Program, Oklahoma Career Technology**
- ** **Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma State Regents Scholars Program, University of Oklahoma Center for Early childhood Professional Development**
- *** **Oklahoma State Dept. of Health; Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association**

5.1.4 For each activity checked, **describe** the expected results of the activity. If you have conducted an evaluation of this activity, **describe the results**. If you have not conducted an evaluation, **describe** how you will evaluate the activities.

- 1) **Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association provides extensive consumer education to parents who call seeking help with locating child care. This includes providing information in a language the family understands, helping families determine which care options best meet their family’s needs, counseling families in a sensitive manner about cost of care and payment assistance options available, providing useful information on quality indicators including what to look for in quality settings (group size, ratio, family involvement, caregiver education and turnover, health and safety indicators), respecting families choices about what options are best for their situation, providing information verbally with written information mailed to the family’s home, referring parents to additional web-linked resources, and advising parents about how to access regulatory monitoring reports on licensed facilities. Additional consumer information is provided through community events**

attended by families, newsletters and brochures distributed in community settings frequented by families, outreach to employers, and through cooperation with other community partners serving families.

During FY06 OCCRRA and its member agencies responded to 8,848 referral calls from parents seeking child care and 4,944 information calls, made 60 presentations to employers, participated in 112 community events, engaged community organizations involved in planning early care and education during 96 events, and utilized the services of an Hispanic Outreach specialist to serve Spanish-speaking families and providers.

- 2) Oklahoma Child Care Services Licensing oversees the statewide licensing program in which 107 licensing representatives monitor 1,817 child care centers and 3,716 family child care homes a minimum of three times a year for licensing compliance. This is reported monthly as a key performance indicator. The compliance target for FY06 was 92.5%, and the average achievement for the year was 94.6%.

- 3) OKDHS contracts with the University of Oklahoma, Department of Continuing Education, for the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (Center). The Center serves as a training resource for child care providers. The Center houses the Oklahoma Registry for consultants/educators, center directors, and child care providers, which assists providers with career planning by assigning them a level on the Professional Development Ladder. The Center coordinates training and technical assistance to providers from the registry. They administer the Oklahoma Training Approval System(OTAS) for educators. Standards recently adopted require educators on the Educator Registry to hold an associate degree in Early Childhood or Child Development. They also administer the Training Approval System (TAS), which assigns provider training one of three levels, Tier I, II, or III. Tier I is informal workshops style training, Tier II must be at least four hours in duration and requires prior approval of the curriculum. Tier III is credit bearing coursework, and the courses must be on the approved coursework listing. Curriculum developed and delivered by the Center is evaluated by pre/post assessments. The Entry Level Child Care Training on line course is being revised to require a minimum passing score before students can be awarded a certificate. The Center also administers the Early Childhood, Infant/Toddler, School-age and Family Day Care Environment Rating Scales. The Center provides director training through videoconferences and a Directors Leadership Academy. The Center has developed a 20-hour entry-level training curriculum to introduce participants to the field of child care and partners with the Career Technology Centers statewide to provide the training on-line. The Center also houses the Child Care Careers training series. Achievement is monitored monthly with a “Performance Dashboard” instrument that sets targets for each objective at the beginning of the fiscal year and reports monthly on performance. See Attachment 5.1.4 for annual report dashboard. Career Tech offers the Pathways curriculum, a

comprehensive Child Development Associate (CDA) curriculum (See 5.2.5). This is a new initiative. Performance will be monitored by tracking enrollment and completion of CDA requirements. Comparison of student numbers with enrollment in other CDA options will be tracked to assure a sufficient pool of students are available to meet the need by the field for CDA credentialed teachers.

OCCRRA (See 5.1) facilitates or provides direct training to child care staff through regional agencies. In FY06 the state network responded to 7,433 requests for provider technical assistance and delivered 1,105 hours of provider training. Child care health consultants conducted 191 onsite consultations at licensed facilities, provided 491 phone consultations, and 52 e-mail consultations. Health consultants delivered 42 trainings and presented 37 “Scrubby Bear” performances to 2,406 children. The Hispanic Outreach Coordinator partnered with CECPD and Smart Start Oklahoma to organize the first ever conference for Hispanic providers. The two day conference offered all sessions in Spanish and was attended by 60 Spanish speaking providers representing both licensed and informal caregivers. The OCCRRA contract includes performance indicators that are tracked in quarterly reports and evaluated annually through site monitoring visits at the regional offices and the state network office. Performance targets are selected at the beginning of the fiscal year, and the network can achieve a bonus for exceeding targets or a penalty for failure to meet targets. The network received a performance bonus for fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education administers the Scholars For Excellence in Child Care (SECC) program which has placed scholar coordinators in the two year colleges statewide to recruit and mentor child care providers seeking credentials and degrees in early childhood education required for the Reaching for the Stars initiative. Another component of the SECC program is the administration of a scholarship program that provides tuition costs, books, and fees to help child care providers receive formal education. SECC also awards assessment fee scholarships for providers obtaining the Child Development Associate and Certified Childcare Professional national credentials. Measurements used include number of students enrolled and number that obtain credentials or degrees. For FY06 2,785 students were enrolled in some form of higher education, 248 students earned a certificate of mastery, 31 obtained a CDA, 91 received associate degrees, and 61 directors earned a Director’s Certificate of Completion. The Scholars Program contracted with a university consortium for an evaluation of the program. Respondents indicated that 16% received promotions in the fall of 2005 and 51% reported promotions as a result of obtaining formal education in the spring of 2006. Participants also reported a group mean increase in the fall of 2005 of 33 cents per hour, and 29 cents per hour in the spring of 2006. Observation of students in the classroom found students were more likely to utilize redirection of children rather than punishment and exhibited a better understanding of normal behavior. They

were more likely to engage children on their level and talked more to children.

- 4) **The Center administers REWARD Oklahoma. This program provides education-based salary supplements to teachers, directors, and family child care providers to reduce turnover in the field by addressing the compensation issue. REWARD achievement is monitored monthly with a “Performance Dashboard” instrument that sets targets for each objective at the beginning of the fiscal year and reports monthly on performance. Staff awarded 4,903 salary supplements in FY06, which exceeded the target. A total of 326 participants obtained additional education that qualified them for a supplement increase due to progression up the Professional Development Ladder.**

- 5) **OKDHS contracts with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries to deliver the “Ready to Learn” early literacy curriculum statewide. The curriculum focuses on early brain development, classroom curriculum planning, wise use of television, and management of challenging behavior in the classroom. In FY06 there were 785 teachers representing 505 child care centers and family child care homes who completed the 6 hour workshop. Telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of teachers who completed the workshop, and a majority of teachers were able to recall key concepts 3 months after attending the class.**
OU (Center) offers Child Care Careers curriculum units that enhance child care provider skills in the early literacy area. (See 2 above)
Oklahoma Career Tech offers Pathways CDA curriculum that addresses all 8 content areas required for the CDA Competency Standards. (See 2 above)

- 6) **OKDHS continues to provide special needs training through contracts with the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center to deliver the TIC-TOC series of inclusion related workshops statewide. In FY06 there were 41 six hour workshops representing 10 different curriculums delivered to 703 participants. Telephone follow-up interviews found that participants are able to utilize content in the classroom to better meet the needs of children with special needs.**
Resource materials for parents and providers have been developed on inclusive child care and include information on the special needs reimbursement rate.
Support for providers dealing with children exhibiting challenging behavior is provided through the Warmline, a statewide toll free access to either a child development specialist or a nurse during business hours or access to an extensive tape library of health related, child development and behavior, or care and related topics 24/7. Providers can also request on-site mental health consultation from a professional to assist them in dealing with social and emotional development or challenging behavior issues. Services are evaluated by interviewing child care center directors who have utilized the services and consultants who delivered the services. A majority of directors

indicated the consultant was able to help them resolve the initial problem, and the facility was able to utilize the services of the consultant to enhance teacher skills and achieve a reduction in the incidence of challenging behavior.

- 7) See (6) above. Also health consultants who are registered nurses are provided through OCCRRA and serve providers in the metro areas of Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Each nurse will enroll a minimum of 10 child care facilities with a licensing capacity of at least 50 children to participate in the Health and Safety Enhancement Project. Pre and post assessments by an independent assessor measure improvements in the care of infants and toddlers after six months of services (training, mentoring, and technical assistance). Results will be available by January, 2008.
- Infant toddler specialists provide specialized consultation, mentoring, and training to support providers and parents. Each infant toddler specialist will enroll a minimum of 10 child care facilities serving a minimum of 8 infants and toddlers to participate in the Infant Toddler Enhancement Project. Pre and post assessments with the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale measure improvements in the environment after six months of services. Results will be available by January, 2008.

- 8) Other initiatives have been described in section 2.1.1 and 5.1.1.

5.2 Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, each Lead Agency is asked to assess its State's progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts and a plan for the education and training of child care providers. The third component of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, planning for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams, was addressed in Section 2.1.2.

- 5.2.1 **Status of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop, implement, or revise research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) for three to five year-olds. **NOTE: Check only one box to best describe the status of your State's three-to-five-year-old guidelines.**

- Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: _____
- Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: _____

- Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Revising.** The State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in developing, implementing, or revising early learning guidelines since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

A committee has been meeting since August 2005 to create core competencies and assure professional development opportunities are available that provide early childhood practitioners the skills necessary to apply ELG in the classroom. Initially, two subcommittees took on separate but related tasks. The Alignment subcommittee task was to create core competencies associated with the eight content areas of Oklahoma’s Early Learning Guidelines. The Implementation subcommittee task was to create professional development opportunities that reflect the guidelines. Due to the challenges of staffing two committees with competent volunteers the decision was made to have one committee address both goals. Five of the eight competencies (Child Growth and Development; Health, Safety and Nutrition; Professionalism and Leadership; Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation; and Child Observation & Assessment) are complete.

A separate committee formed out of the Better Baby Care Forum to begin work on Infant/Toddler Early Learning Guidelines. Objectives of this group are: 1) develop a research based framework that aligns with the ELG for 3-5 year olds; 2) provide a framework for families, caregivers, and community programs that supports opportunities for infants and toddlers to reach their full potential; 3) provide a resource for the education of families, caregivers, and community programs and a means to evaluate settings and programs. The guidelines are separated into areas of development that include physical, social and emotional, cognitive, and language. Each area of development is separated into a developmental continuum range: young infant (0-8 months), mobile infant (6-18 months), and toddler (16-36 months). Skills developed during each time period are listed sequentially for the age range but are recognized not to be exclusive to that age group. Finally, within each area of development the I/T ELG catalog three areas, “The Baby May,”

(developmental expectations), “The Baby Might,” (examples of common behaviors), and “The Teacher Can,” (suggested activities for I/T teachers).

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards or other standards (e.g., Head Start Child Outcomes, State Performance Standards)?

Yes. If yes, **name standards.**
Priority Academic Student Skills or PASS and Head Start standards

No.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with early childhood curricula?

Yes. If yes, **describe.**
The content areas and standards align with the K-12 content standards (Oklahoma State Department of Education’s Priority Academic Student Skills) and Head Start standards. The public school Pre-K teachers are utilizing the Early Learning Guidelines as their curriculum guidelines. Training in use of the ELG for child care providers is being implemented statewide.

No.

Have guidelines been developed for children in the following age groups (check if guidelines have been developed):

Birth to three. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1

Birth to five. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1

Five years or older. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1

Efforts to develop early learning guidelines for children that may differ from those addressed in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (i.e., children birth to three or older than five) may be described here.

If any of your guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (guidelines must still be attached to Plan):

<http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/prvdrs/lic/>

5.2.2 **Domains of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-years-old address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

X Yes.

No.

Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-years-old address domains not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart*, such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, creative arts, or other domains?

Yes. If yes, **describe**.

Approaches to Learning, Creative Skills, Language Arts, Mathematics, Health, Safety and Physical Development, Social and Personal Skills, Social Studies

No.

5.2.3 **Implementation of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines. Indicate** the strategies the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines.

Check all that apply:

- Disseminating materials to practitioners and families
- Developing training curricula
- Partnering with other training entities to deliver training
- Aligning early learning guidelines with licensing, core competencies, and/or quality rating systems
- Other. Describe:

Indicate the stakeholders that are (or expect to be) actively supporting the implementation of early learning guidelines.	Indicate the programs that mandate or require the use of early learning guidelines.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care	<input type="checkbox"/> Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Head Start	<input type="checkbox"/> Head Start
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Describe:

How are (or will) cultural, linguistic and individual variations (be) acknowledged in implementation? **The (core competencies) implementation plan addresses**

five practitioner skill levels: new to early childhood, CDA or equivalent, associate degree, bachelor degree, advanced degree. The ELG committee is made up of a diverse group (Head Start, Pre-K, Department of Education, higher education, child care center directors, Oklahoma Child Care Services, and the state professional development program [CECPD]). Representatives of Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association are invited and receive regular progress reports.

How are (or will) the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation? **To assure providers have basic understanding of early childhood learning environments faculty at Oklahoma State University developed the 20 hour course, “Creating Effective Learning Environments,” which serves as a prerequisite for ELG training. Directors and staff are encouraged to attend together. The course was offered at four locations across Oklahoma from January-June 2007. The ELG training is also a 20 hour course that focuses more intently on how to apply the guidelines in the early childhood classroom. ELG training was also scheduled at four locations statewide during the same time period. Training of trainers is planned for FY08, and child care resource and referral staff received training in both courses so they can assist providers with implementation as well.**

Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.3**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address:

Attachment 5.2.3(a) Creating Effective Learning Environments curriculum
Attachment 5.2.3(b) Early Learning Guidelines curriculum

5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines. As applicable, **describe** the State's plan for:

- (a) Validating the content of the early learning guidelines**
- (b) Assessing the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines**
- (c) Assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines**
- (d) Aligning the guidelines with accountability initiatives**

N/A but Oklahoma plans to create evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of ELG. Focus Portfolios training is the evaluative tool to help providers in assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines. Focus Portfolio training was initiated and providers are being trained. The research component is still in development.

Written reports of these efforts are included as **Attachment 5.2.4**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (reports must still be attached to Plan):

5.2.5 State Plans for Professional Development. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education. **NOTE: Check ONLY ONE box to best describe the status of your State's professional development plan.**

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the entities involved in the planning process, time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft or planning documents are included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented, or has been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- Revising.** The State previously developed a professional development plan and is now revising that plan, or has revised it since submitting the 06-07 State Plan. The revisions or the revised plan are included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- Other (describe):**
Oklahoma reorganized professional development planning efforts into the Early Education Professional Development Committee(EEPDC). Members represent for-profit and not-for-profit child care center directors, two & four-year colleges, Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association, Head Start, Career Tech, Oklahoma Child Care Services Licensing, Oklahoma Child Care Services Stars, Scholars for Excellence in Child Care, Oklahoma Department of Education, Oklahoma Smart Start and Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral Association. See Attachment 5.2.5 for the charge to the EEPDC from Mark Lewis, OKDHS Director of Child Care Services.

See also 5.2.1 for a description of work done by the ELG implementation and alignment committee to create core competencies and assure the availability of relevant professional development opportunities for early childhood practitioners that align with Oklahoma's Early Learning Guidelines.

Much effort of the early education community in 2006 went towards transitioning into a new Child Development Associate program in Oklahoma called Pathways ©. Pathway to CDA is a comprehensive

CDA preparation curriculum consisting of 200 hours. The Pathway option consists of 130 clock hours of formal education offered through the CareerTech system. Requirements include a hands-on component consisting of an additional 70 hours throughout the curriculum that can be completed in the provider's family child care home or center. The formal training consists of 5 training modules (17 units) that address all 8 content areas required for the CDA Competency Standards. The training is provided both in the traditional means of a classroom setting as well as on-line to meet statewide accessibility needs. Scholarships awarded through the Scholars for Excellence in Child Care Program are available for those that meet eligibility criteria.

The committee has also redesigned the training approval system for educators. All educators on the Educator Registry must hold an associate degree in Early Childhood or Child Development or an associate degree in non early childhood with 15 credit hours of early childhood courses by July 1, 2007. There are three levels: Apprentice, Practitioner, and Specialist. Educators are required to participate in 15 hours of Adult Education provided by CECPD. An additional 3 training hours is required for educators wanting to instruct the Pathways to CDA curriculum.

A team has worked on revamping the REWARD salary supplement program since February 2006. The goal of using salary supplements as a tool for reducing staff turnover is retained, but a strong professional development goal will be implemented by January 2008. Participants in the REWARD program must demonstrate completion of 9 credit hours per year and continue movement up the professional development ladder to continue receiving salary supplements. Annual supplements at the lower levels of the professional development ladder will increase substantially under the new plan.

Oklahoma plans to contract for an assessment of the early education professional development system in FY08. In addition to identifying strengths and weaknesses in Oklahoma's professional development plan, the assessment will provide a roadmap to development of a statewide professional development plan.

Describe the progress made by the State in planning, developing, implementing, or revising the professional development plan since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

Oklahoma is in the process of developing a plan, but the different elements have not been compiled into a single document.

Since 1998 the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD, University of Oklahoma, College of Continuing Education) has provided a one-stop training information center for child care providers. CECPD houses the Oklahoma Registry, which recognizes the professional development of individuals working in early care and education. This includes the staff of full and part-day programs, family child care home providers, school-age child care providers, Head Start staff, trainers, college faculty, consultants and agency staff of professional child care organizations. The Registry also administers the Director’s Credential. CECPD also administers a training approval system for trainers and course content. Other services provided by CECPD are listed in Section 5.1.42.

During FY 2006 responsibilities of the committee advising CECPD on professional development issues were reorganized to reflect an expanded role as an advisory body for all child care professional development. ,at the beginning of FY07be The Early Education Professional Development committee’s membership include for-profit and not-for-profit child care center directors, two & four-year colleges, Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association, Career Tech, Oklahoma Child Care Services Licensing, Oklahoma Child Care Services Stars, Scholars for Excellence in Child Care, Oklahoma Department of Education, Oklahoma Smart Start and Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral Association.

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include (Check EITHER yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
1. Specific goals or desired outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Continuum of training and education to form a career path	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. A system to track practitioners’ training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. State Credentials – State for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors’ credential, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For each Yes response, reference the page(s) in the plan and briefly describe.

1. See Attachment 5.2.5 for the goals of the Early Education Professional Development Committee.

2. See 5.2.1, page 49 for a description of efforts in Oklahoma to create core competencies and align professional development opportunities with ELG.
3. See 5.1.4(3) for description of Oklahoma Registry, p. 45.
4. See 5.1.4(3), p. 45.
5. See 5.1.4(3), p. 45, Oklahoma Training Approval System.
6. See 5.1.4(3), p. 45, Oklahoma Training Approval System.
7. See 5.1.4(3) for description of Oklahoma Registry, p. 45.
8. See 5.1.4(3) for description of evaluation of training, p. 45.
9. See p. 55, this section. Center directors in Oklahoma are required to hold a Director’s Credential at one of three levels: Bronze, Silver, or Gold.

For each **No** response, **indicate** any plans the Lead Agency has to incorporate these components.

10. The state supports the work of Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association and Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association in their efforts to serve family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

Are the professional development opportunities described in the plan available:

Note: Check either yes or no for each item):

No professional development plan has been written, but educational opportunities are available.

	Yes	No
Statewide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Describe how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development. **See 5.1.3 and 5.2.2**

Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

- Yes. If yes, **describe**, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- **The Reaching for the Stars program requires participating programs to have and follow a salary scale with increments based on level of education, credentials, and years of early childhood experience;**
 - **The Scholars for Excellence in Child Care provides scholarships for providers to take formal early childhood education courses. The courses provide information on appropriate classroom activities and include information on each of the four domains;**
 - **REWARD offers salary supplements to child care providers based on their formal educational attainment. During the 2008-2009 state plan period new requirements will be implemented that encourage participants to continue their education. Time limits at each level of the REWARD scales require participants to progress up the scales as a condition of continued participation.**
- No. If no, **describe** any plans to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts?

As applicable, does the State assess the effectiveness of its professional development plan, including the achievement of any specified goals or desired outcomes?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** how the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal is assessed. **The Early Education Professional Development Committee has recently been organized to develop the goals of the professional development system. See 5.25**
- No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessments of the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal achievement.

Does the State assess the effectiveness of specific professional development initiatives or components?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** how specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness is assessed.

CECPD contracts annually with Educational Training, Evaluation, Assessment, and Measurement (E-TEAM) to conduct evaluations of training delivered under the auspices of CECPD.

Monthly conferences are held with CECPD to discuss the current results of each program offered through their contract. Contract objectives are tracked monthly using the Performance Dashboard (Attachment 5.1.4)

Oklahoma State University is currently conducting research on the Scholars for Excellence in Child Care (SECC) initiative which will determine the effectiveness of the mentoring and scholarships.

The SECC program is assessing the number of child care providers receiving the CDA, Certificate of Mastery, Director's Certificate of Mastery, Director's Certificate of Completion, or the Associate of Arts degree.

- No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessments of specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness.

As applicable, does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape or revise its professional development plan?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** how assessment informs the professional development plan.

Oklahoma plans to contract for an assessment of the early education professional development system in FY08. In addition to identifying strengths and weaknesses in Oklahoma's professional development plan, the assessment will guide development of a statewide professional development plan.

- No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessment to inform the professional development plan.

PART 6
HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.

No. If no, **describe** which center-based providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as they relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

Oklahoma revised transportation requirements for child care centers, part-day children's programs, school-age programs, family child care homes, residential and child placing agencies effective June 1, 2006. A 23-member revision subcommittee was formed comprised of representatives from licensed facilities, highway safety officials, child passenger restraint safety technicians and licensing staff. Concerns regarding transportation safety were addressed through revisions regarding:

- **drivers training (when driving a vehicle designed to transport 10 or more passengers)**
- **child passenger restraint training**
- **regular maintenance of all facility vehicles to include quarterly inspection of tire wear and pressure, brakes, lights, and functioning seat belts.**

No.

6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.
- No. If no, **describe** which group home providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

Oklahoma revised transportation requirements for child care centers, part-day children's programs, school-age programs, family child care homes, residential and child placing agencies effective June 1, 2006. A 23-member revision subcommittee was formed comprised of representatives from licensed facilities, highway safety officials, child passenger restraint safety technicians and licensing staff. Concerns regarding transportation safety were addressed through revisions regarding:

- **drivers training (when driving a vehicle designed to transport 10 or more passengers)**
- **child passenger restraint training**
- **regular maintenance of all facility vehicles to include quarterly inspection of tire wear and pressure, brakes, lights, and functioning seat belts.**

No.

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.

No. If no, **describe** which family child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

Oklahoma revised transportation requirements for child care centers, part-day children's programs, school-age programs, family child care homes, residential and child placing agencies effective June 1, 2006. A 23-member revision subcommittee was formed comprised of representatives from licensed facilities, highway safety officials, child passenger restraint safety technicians and licensing staff. Concerns regarding transportation safety were addressed through revisions regarding:

- **drivers training (when driving a vehicle designed to transport 10 or more passengers)**
- **child passenger restraint training**
- **regular maintenance of all facility vehicles to include quarterly inspection of tire wear and pressure, brakes, lights, and functioning seat belts.**

No.

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above?

Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.

No. If no, **describe** which in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

In-home providers are exempt from licensing under Oklahoma law. An approved caregiver provides care in the child's home when the family is approved for child care subsidy.

6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

No.

6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

Providers are given written information to assist them in the prevention and control of infectious disease. The provider and parent are also asked to answer questions on two separate forms titled Mutual Agreement Regarding the Plan of Care and In-Home Provider Health and Safety Checklist about how the prevention and control of infectious diseases will be handled.

- Building and physical premises safety
The In-Home Provider Health and Safety checklist includes physical premises safety.

- Health and safety training

Local social services specialists approve in-home providers. The potential in-home provider and parent/guardian must complete Form CCDF-2-A, Mutual Agreement Regarding the Plan of Care and Form CCDF-2-B, In-Home Provider Health and Safety Checklist prior to approval of the in-home provider. In-home providers must complete a minimum of six clock hours of training within 90 calendar days from the date the county director signs and dates the approved plan of care. The training requirement must be met through attendance at workshops and/or formal training programs, viewing audio-visual aids and/or individual job-related readings such as *For Your Family's Sake TAKE TIME OUT*, *First Aid for Poisoning*, *Fire Facts for Kids*, *Oklahoma Child Care* journal. The above-OKDHS publications are sent to the in-home providers. In-home providers are required to send a declaration of training documenting the training activities and number of hours to the local social service specialist.

In-home providers can also be approved for the add-on special needs rate. To receive this additional rate the provider must be certified in first aid and infant and child CPR, must receive on-site consultation regarding the nature of the child's disability and the development of the child care plan. A health care professional, a state early intervention specialist or a consultant through the Center can provide this consultation. The provider must agree to obtain six additional hours of training in areas that address the care of children with disabilities within six months of approval.

6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A))
Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?
 - Yes. If yes, **indicate** which providers are subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
Oklahoma State Statute requires that all child care facilities including family child care homes be licensed. Upon licensure, OKDHS licensing staff conduct a minimum of three unannounced visits each year.
 - No.
- Are child care providers subject to background checks?
 - Yes. If yes, **indicate** which types of providers are subject to background checks and when such checks are conducted:

Applicants for a license, anyone employed by a child care facility, those with unsupervised access to children, and adults who live in a child care facility

must have a criminal background check through the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

No.

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

Yes. If yes, **describe** the State's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

Child care providers must report to Licensing Services any serious injuries by the next working day. The licensing representative conducts an investigation of the circumstance when appropriate, and a record is maintained in the licensing file.

No.

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

PART 7
HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES

(Only the Territories complete Part 7)

7.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all center-based care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all group home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all family child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers in the Territories

(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all in-home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.5 Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives may be exempted from health and safety requirements: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care). (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- Some or all** relative providers are subject to **different** health and safety requirements from those described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 and the following describes those different requirements and the relatives they apply to:

7.6 Enforcement of Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how Territorial health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

Yes. If yes, **indicate** which providers are subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:

No.

Are child care providers subject to background checks?

Yes. If yes, **indicate** which types of providers are subject to background checks and when such checks are conducted:

No.

Does the Territory require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

Yes. If yes, **describe** the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

No.

Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

7.7 Exemptions from Territorial Immunization Requirements

The Territory assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the Territorial public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The Territory exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

APPENDIX 1
PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 109-149)

The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))

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- (3) it 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)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

APPENDIX 2 ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must **define** the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

- *attending* (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable) - **Documentation of need must include proof of the client’s training or class schedule per semester and proof the client is making progress in completing the degree or training program. Child care is limited to charges necessary for actual classroom attendance, including travel time. Additional study time is not approved. When there are gaps in class times, the social services specialist may approve child care beginning with the first class of the day through the last class of the day. Time for laboratory work may be included in the approval for child care if participation is required for the course and is part of an actual classroom activity.**

- *in loco parentis* - **A person acting in place of a parent without going through legal proceedings. He/she is expected to pursue child support from the natural or adoptive parent(s) of the child(ren).**

- *job training and educational program* - **Job skills training includes vocational training and “hands on” work experience to develop technical skills, knowledge, and abilities in specific occupational areas. All training programs must include qualitative measures to evaluate participant’s progress. Examples include competency gains, proficiency levels, and certificates of completion. A formal education program is defined as a course of study that leads to the attainment of an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree. Post-graduate work is excluded.**

- *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) -

A child with special needs is defined as a child receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), SoonerStart early intervention services, or special education services provided in accordance with an individualized Education program (IEP) by the local school district. This definition also includes a child who meets the medical definition of disability as determined by the Social Security Administration but does not meet the financial criteria to receive SSI benefits.

Prior to approving a child with disabilities for child care after age 13, a statement from a licensed health care professional must be received verifying the child is physically or mentally incapable of self-care as age appropriate.

- *protective services* - **Protective or preventive child care services are used as an early intervention strategy in certain critical situations to help in preventing neglect, abuse, or exploitation. The social services specialist may approve child care in these situations to help stabilize the family situation or to enhance family functioning.**

- *residing with* -
The natural or adoptive parent(s) of the children who is living in the home and for whom child care is needed; the caretaker(s) of the minor child(ren) who needs child care if that caretaker(s) is legally and financially responsible for the child(ren); all minor children residing in the home for whom the payee is financially responsible; the stepparent of the minor child(ren) who is living in the home and for whom child care is needed; any non-relative adult of the opposite sex who is living in the home with the natural or adoptive parent; and any child(ren) of the non-relative adult of the opposite sex who is living in the home with the natural or adoptive parent.
- *special needs child* - Same as 4th bullet.
- *very low income* -
income below the allowable income listed on the OKDHS Appendix C-4, Child Care Eligibility/Rates Schedule.
- *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) -
Employment is defined as the individual earnings/wages for work performed if the adult is part of the household for income purposes. When child care is needed for employment, the days and hours approved are limited to the actual hours of employment including reasonable travel time. Bartering for services in exchange for work performed does not meet the definition of need due to employment. If the individual is not making at least minimum wage for the number of hours he/she is working, the social services specialist counsels with the individual on increasing pay. The social services specialist and client decide jointly what strategy to use to increase the client's income and by what date this plan will be accomplished or progress will be made. If the client does not cooperate in either making an action plan to increase income or in following through with the plan he/she agreed to try, child care for this employment enterprise can be reduced or terminated. Job search meets the definition of employment and child care may be approved only when a recipient who has received child care services for at least 30 days loses employment or successfully completes a formal education or training program and requests child care assistance to look for a job. Child care may be approved for a maximum of 30 calendar days from the date the client loses employment or successfully completes a formal education or training program. Job search may be approved no more than twice per calendar year.
- Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:
Citizenship - Only the child(ren) for whom child care is requested must meet the citizenship and alienage requirements listed in OKDHS TANF policy.

Joint custody- When parents separate or divorce and share custody of their child(ren), either voluntarily or through a court order, the social services specialist considers each parent's eligibility separately as well as his/her income. If only one parent qualifies for subsidized child care, only the days and hours of care needed while that parent has physical custody of the child(ren) is approved.

Additional co-payment- child care payments paid directly to the child care provider by a non-household member are considered as an additional co-payment which must be met before OKDHS makes a subsidy payment to the provider.

Exploration and development of potential income- Initial and continued eligibility for Department subsidized child care requires the applicant or recipient to pursue all potential sources of income within 90 days of the application or review approval. When there is the possibility of physical or emotional harm to the child or the custodial parent or caretaker, pursuit of child support services may not be in the best interest of the family and is not pursued.