

U. ALLOCATED CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE SEATS PILOT OVERVIEW (BIRTH TO THREE YEAR OLD SEATS)

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides low-income, working households with access to quality, affordable child care that allows them to continue working and contributes to the healthy, emotional and social development of the child. In addition to helping low-income, working households, the Child Care Assistance Program also serves households who are participating in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) program that meet the education and training requirements, children receiving child welfare children, and families experiencing homelessness.

Support for quality child care centers is needed to achieve the goal of kindergarten readiness. In order to achieve this, LDE will increase CCAP subsidy rates for Type III child care centers. Infant/toddler rates will increase from \$18.50 to \$22.50 per day while Pre-K rates will increase from \$17.50 to \$21.50 per day. Increases are expected to begin January 2016.

LDE will also be changing the co-pay structure and eligibility period to help support families. The structure will change from the current sliding fee scale to a minimal flat fee per week based on household income. No family in poverty will have a co-pay (currently 80% on sliding fee scale). Providers will be able charge for the difference between the CCAP subsidy and the provider's rate. Families will also remain eligible for at least one year regardless of life changes. Certification periods may be extended to ensure that children are able to attend for a full school year.

OVERVIEW

- One-year competitive pilot with 4-8 communities beginning in Fall 2016
- Approximately 10% of the current CCAP seats (Up to 1200 seats)
- Only full time seats will be contracted, for the 12 month year, July 2016 – June 2017
- Each center will have to specify the age group they would like to serve (3-year-olds, toddlers, or infants) and must be able to serve at least half of a class (i.e., if using a 1:12 ratio for two-year-olds, center must request at least six seats). Centers may only apply for children ages 3 and under.
- Type III child care centers will apply with Lead Agencies.
- Children must meet the 74% attendance rate. Each child is allowed a maximum of 5 paid absence days. Excused absences are allowed and will be determined by the child care center (documentation must be submitted to the LDE upon request).
- Centers will be allowed to continuously accept CCAP vouchers in addition to the allocated seats.
- Centers will be responsible for filling seats. To assist centers, applications submitted for Allocated CCAP seats will be expedited. LDE will notify the center of a case decision within 10 business days upon receipt of a completed application to include all requested verification documents.

NEW OPPORTUNITY – ALLOCATED CCAP SEATS PILOT

Allocated CCAP seats are a set number of CCAP seats that are granted to a certain child care center. The center will determine the number of seats it can maintain. Once LDE grants a set number of seats to a center, the center will then fill the seats with CCAP eligible children. LDE will agree to continuously pay for the CCAP seats as long as the child care center meets the attendance requirements of CCAP. In the event that a family removes a child from a center and a seat becomes vacant, the center will be responsible for filling the seat with another CCAP eligible child. LDE will pay for these seats through a monthly allocation.

The purpose of allocated CCAP seats is to help child care centers effectively plan for their expected enrollment, have more stable funding, and be better positioned to serve the most at-risk children in a quality setting.

BENEFITS

The purpose of allocated CCAP seats is to provide an incentive for CCAP child care centers by increasing stability and ensuring consistency of payment for CCAP seats. By knowing the number of allocated seats in advance, centers will be able to hire and retain high-quality teachers as well as decrease the amount of vacant seats, possibly eliminating waiting lists and reducing the risk of overstaffing. This provides support for improvements to quality and access as well as sustainable funding for high quality programs. **Allocated CCAP seats are also funded for the full, 12 month year.** These benefits to the center provide the additional benefit of stability and continuity for the children served.

PAYMENTS

- Centers will be paid a monthly allocation at the lowest CCAP rate of \$18.50/day (\$407/month) for three-year-olds and \$19.50/day (\$429/month) for infants and toddlers.
- Based on October 1 enrollment in allocated CCAP seats, allocated CCAP seats will be reevaluated and paid at the level that each family qualifies for. Since initial payments are based on the lowest rate, providers will only benefit from the reconciliation.
- Quality bonuses will continue to be paid for any eligible CCAP child enrolled in an allocated seat.

HOW TO APPLY

- The center must determine the number of seats it can maintain for each age group (3 year olds, toddler, and infant)
- The center must request the number of seats through the Coordinated Funding Request that is submitted by the Lead Agency.

HOW DO FAMILIES QUALIFY

Currently, households are required to pay a co-pay based on a sliding scale. The amount of assistance is based on:

- the total number of hours all household adults work, attend education or training program,
- family size
- gross income
- number of children in care
- the maximum rates paid by the state

More information about CCAP and program eligibility requirements can be found at: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/child-care-assistance-program>

ALLOCATED CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PILOT ASSURANCES:

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

I understand that the allocation to a center may be reduced if the number of slots awarded to the center are not filled by the center by October 1st.

I will provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs to at-risk children between the ages of birth to three.

I will maintain accurate child-attendance records and adhere to attendance policies.

I will comply with the applicable regulations and minimum standards found in BESE Bulletin 137 – *Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations*.

I agree to participate fully in the Early Childhood Care and Education Network and participate in the implementation of coordinated enrollment, as provided in BESE Bulletin 140 - *The Early Childhood Care and Education Network*.

I agree to submit any additional information and/or documentation requested by the LDE prior to final approval by BESE.

I agree to maintain documentation of program implementation and effectiveness and submit any reports, data, or other pertinent information as requested by the Department of Education.

I agree to allow the Department of Education and the Legislative Auditor, and all other required personnel access to the records and financial statements as necessary according to regulations issued by the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133.

I agree to maintain all records, and other documents for at least (3) federal fiscal years (July 2016 to June 2019) after the final payment or as described in 4CFR 74.53(b), whichever is longest.

I, the undersigned, am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of this early learning center. I assure and certify that the site will comply with all requirements, regulations, and policies and assurance given, as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made.

This Agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is binding on the early learning center, its successors, transferees, and assignees. This agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is entered into in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all financial assistance to operate the program(s) for which this application is made.

All information provided in this agreement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that all information is being provided in connection with the receipt of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made. I understand that Department of Education personnel may verify information, and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable Federal and State criminal statutes.

Signature of Leader/Chief Administrator

Community Network

Printed Name

Mailing Address

Title

Telephone Number

Date

PRELIMINARY