



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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NOV 15 2019

Ken Schatz, Commissioner
Vermont Department for Children and Families
280 State Drive, NOB 1 North
Waterbury, VT 05671

Dear Commissioner Schatz:

The Office of Child Care has completed its review of the proposed amendments to Vermont's conditionally approved Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan for 2019-2021, submitted on September 18, 2019.

This letter is to inform you that the following CCDF Plan amendments were approved.

- **Section 2.3.7b – Consumer Education** – Amended to correct a broken link to the sample monitoring report, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 3.1.3 – Income Eligibility** – Amended to reflect the use of the 2020 State Median Income guidelines, update SMI source and effective date, effective July 21, 2019.
- **Section 3.3.2 – Discontinue Assistance During 12-Month Eligibility-** Amended to correct a broken link for VT's policy regarding substantiated fraud or intentional program violation, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 3.4.1 – Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services** – Amended to reflect the copayment amounts based on the new income guidelines, effective July 21, 2019.
- **Section 3.4.4 – Waiving Family Contributions/Co-Payments** – Amended to correct a broken link for the Lead Agencies policy for waiving co-payments for those in foster care, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 4.3.1 – Setting Payment Rates-** Amended to reflect Vermont's policy change that makes all regulated programs in good regulatory standing automatically STAR level 1 in the QRIS system and therefore the base rates are now the STAR level 1 rates. Please note, Vermont remains out of compliance for **Section 4.4.1b Equal Access** for your FY 2019-2021 CCDF Plan, and, therefore still subject to the notice of non-compliance issued on April 12, 2019 until all CCDF requirements are met.
- **Section 4.4.1b -- Equal Access**—Amended to align the preschool and school- age rates with the 2014 market rate survey, they were previously aligned with the 2008

market rate survey. The rate change was effective July 21, 2019. Please note, Vermont remains out of compliance for **Section 4.4.1b Equal Access** for your FY 2019-2021 CCDF Plan, and, therefore still subject to the notice of non-compliance issued on April 12, 2019 until all CCDF requirements are met.

- **Section 5.2.3e10 –Health and Safety Requirements-Training**—Amended to reflect that staff must complete pediatric first aid and infant and child CPR within the first three months of beginning work, effective September 30, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont’s CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule for this requirement.
- **Section 6.1.1—Professional Development Framework**—Amended to correct a broken link for the Northern Lights @CCV, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 6.1.2—Professional Development Framework**—Amended to correct broken links for the Professional Preparation and Development Committee and for the advisory body for NL@CCV, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 6.1.3—Professional Development Framework--** Amended to correct broken links for the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program and Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 6.2.5—Technical Assistance for Providers in Identifying and Serving Homeless Children and their Families**—Amended to reflect Vermont’s current practice for training and technical assistance efforts in this area, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 7.1.1—Quality Activities Needs Assessment for Child Care Services**— Amended to correct broken links for Vermont’s Early Childhood Framework, Early Childhood Action Plan and the structure and implementation cycle, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 7.1.2 – Quality Assessment Findings**—Amended to correct a broken link for Vermont’s Early Childhood Action Plan, effective September 18, 2019.
- **Section 7.4.2—QRIS Participation**—Amended to reflect that QRIS participation is now mandatory for all regulated programs in Vermont, effective September 1, 2019.
- **Section 7.5.1—Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers**—Amended to correct broken links for Starting Points Network, the local Community Child Care Support Agencies and added the link for the Northern Lights Training Guide - 2019-2020, effective September 18, 2019.

The effective dates for these amendments to Vermont's CCDF Plan are noted on the amendments log within the ACF-118 electronic submission site.

Additionally, this letter also documents the updated status for sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.4, 5.4.5, and 5.4.6 for Criminal Background Checks. We acknowledge the efforts in implementing these requirements and congratulate you on this achievement.

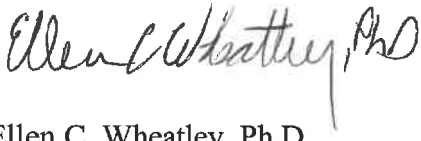
- **Section 5.4.1—In-state Background Check Requirements**—Amended to reflect that the in-state criminal registry check with the use of fingerprints has been conducted for all existing staff, effective September 1, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont's CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule and is no longer under a waiver for this requirement.
- **Section 5.4.2—In-state Sex Offender Registry Requirements**—Amended to reflect that the in-state sex offender registry check has been completed for all existing staff, effective August 15, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont's CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule and is no longer under a waiver for this requirement.
- **Section 5.4.4 – National FBI Criminal Fingerprint Requirement**—Amended to reflect that the FBI criminal fingerprint search has been completed for all existing staff, effective September 1, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont's CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule and is no longer under a waiver for this requirement.
- **Section 5.4.5 – National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry(NSOR) Requirements**—Amended to reflect that the NCIC NSOR check has been completed for all existing staff, effective September 1, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont's CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule and is no longer under a waiver for this requirement.
- **Section 5.4.6 – Inter-state Criminal Registry or Repository Check Requirement**— Amended to reflect that the inter-state criminal registry check has been completed for all existing staff, effective September 1, 2019. Approval of this amendment indicates that Vermont's CCDF Plan demonstrates compliance with the Final Rule and is no longer under a waiver for this requirement.

Additionally, this letter also documents approval for waivers as applicable for sections 5.4.8a, 5.4.8b and 5.4.9 for Criminal Background Checks. The waiver renewals are approved for a period of no more than one additional year. States are expected to be in full compliance of the background check requirements of Section 5.4 by September 30, 2020. OCC does not have authority under the current law to grant any additional extensions after this date.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact Shireen Riley, Child Care Program Manager in our Boston Regional Office at 617-565-1152 and shireen.riley@acf.hhs.gov.

We appreciate your efforts to meet the child care needs of eligible families in the State of Vermont, and look forward to our continued partnership in the administration of your Child Care and Development Fund Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen C. Wheatley, Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "W".

Ellen C. Wheatley, Ph.D.
Deputy Director
Office of Child Care

cc: Melissa Riegel-Garrett, Policy Director
Anne Rada, Child Care Financial Assistance Program Administrator
Shireen Riley, OCC Regional Program Manager, Region 1
Dawn Ramsburg, Regional Liaison, Office of Child Care