 <b>VERMONT</b> DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1 style="font-size: 48pt; margin: 0;">73</h1>
Chapter:	Working with Youth and Families	
Subject:	Protective Services Child Care	Page 1 of 4
Approved:	Karen Shea, Deputy Commissioner	Effective: 3/3/2019
Supersedes:	Family Services Policy 73	Dated: 5/24/2006

## Purpose

- To help ensure that children of families served by the Family Services Division participate in wholesome care and educational experiences while attending child care; and
- To provide division staff with specific guidance about engaging child care providers and including protective services child care in the child's case plan.

## Definitions

**Protective Services Child Care:** Specialized child care that is authorized by a Family Services Worker (FSW) in ongoing family support cases, conditional custody cases, and custody cases.

**Protective Services Authorization (PSA):** The web-based form that is completed by the Family Services Worker that initiates the child care payment and placement process with the Child Development Division (CDD).


**Children's Integrated Services Child Care Coordinator (CIS CCC):** CIS Child Care Coordinators are part of the regional Children's Integrated Services team working directly with families, services providers, Family Services Workers and child care programs to support placement stability, eligibility determination and resources and supports for children with specialized needs.

**Specialized Child Care (SCC):** Licensed or Regulated Child Care programs that have met specific requirements as determined by the Child Development Division (CDD). Specialized Child Care programs work directly with families and other service providers to support children in their care.

**Approved Relative Care Provider (ARCC):** Relatives defined as grandparents, great-grandparents, adult siblings (if the sibling lives in a separate residence), aunt or uncle by birth, by marriage or by court decree.

## Policy

Children of families involved in DCF custody cases, conditional custody order (CCO) cases, and family support cases who need child care should receive child care with an approved protective services child care provider. If a child care provider known to the child wishes to provide protective services child care, the family services worker should work with the CIS child care coordinator (CCC) to determine whether the provider is eligible for approval.

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### Initiating the Process

In cases where DCF does not have custody of the child, conditional custody orders (CS) and family support cases (CF), the family services worker will need to secure a release of information from the parent or caregiver to share their contact information with the CIS child care coordinator. The signed release should remain in the family's case file. A release is not necessary for DCF custody cases.

Prior to completing a PSA on any case, the family services worker will connect with the CIS child care coordinator to share information about the child's needs, involvement with the division, and discuss possible child care programs and any other relevant information.


It is important that the family services worker be in regular communication with the CIS child care coordinator to discuss information critical to the coordination of the child care services. For example, the family services worker should inform the CIS child care coordinator if the child care is struggling or needs additional resources or supports in addition to informing them of when there are new PSAs, changes to child care schedules, payment issues, guardianship changes, transitions, and especially when a case is going to close.

### Engaging Child Care Providers

A child's child care provider is an important member of the child's team, often spending more time with the child than any other person. Additionally, the child care provider sees the parent(s) regularly and has informal opportunities to provide support and teaching over time. The presence of a strong and supportive child care provider in a child and family's life may eventually allow the family to be free from FSD intervention.

All children in protective services child care must have a completed PSA on record with the CDD for the provider to be paid. The PSA is completed by the family services worker after connecting with the CIS child care coordinator. **All PSAs must be authorized for 12-month period of time.**

In rare instances where a child's needs cannot be met in a group setting, the family services worker may request approval to use an approved relative care provider (ARCC) to provide child care in their home or the child's home. For this purpose, relatives are defined as grandparents, great-grandparents, adult siblings (if the sibling lives in a separate residence), and aunt or uncle by birth, by marriage, or by court decree. The process to certify the provider will be expedited by the Child Development Division (CDD). **Payment may not begin until approval is granted.**

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**Infant Care**

Protective services child care is typically not provided for babies under the age of six weeks. Family services workers should contact CIS child care coordinator if there are circumstances where a newborn may need protective services child care.

**Children/Youth with Sexually Harmful Behaviors in Child Care Settings**

A child age ten or older who has been adjudicated delinquent as a result of a sexual offense may not receive child care in a licensed or registered child care facility. A child age ten or older who is a substantiated perpetrator of child sexual abuse may receive child care in a licensed or registered child care facility with a waiver from the CDD.

For those few children who cannot be served in a group child care setting due to the risk they pose to other children, the family services worker may request that the CDD approve an ARCC to provide care for the child in their home. In this situation, the potential provider must have taken or agree to take the protective services training. The CDD will expedite the approval of providers under these circumstances. **Approval must be obtained before child care begins.**

**Out of State Child Care Programs**

In order to receive child care financial assistance, an out-of-state program must be a licensed or registered child care program monitored by child care licensing in their specific state.

The child care program must be in good standing with their child care licensing agency. The CIS CCC is responsible for working with the child care program to make sure they meet the requirements and therefore must be made part of the process immediately. The CDD reserves the right to screen and approve or deny the requests for child care financial assistance and to require certain conditions for approval.

**Authorization of Payment**

Payment for protective services child care will begin only after authorization by the family services worker, and when required above, a waiver from the CDD. The Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP) Program will make full payment for child care services delivered to children in open cases with FSD. Full payment includes the co-pay unless the child is being cared for by an ARCC as there are no co-pays for these providers, just a level rate established by the CDD. **PSAs backdated beyond 60 days will not be accepted.**

**Appendix I:**

