

led by NCFE, focusing on the needs for families, especially low income, to access quality child care as an economic development and community vitality driver. Knowing barriers experienced by refugees in communities across Nebraska, NCFE reached out to partners at Midlands Latino Community Development Corporation (MLCDC) to prepare the grant application. MLCDC provides Latinos and low income individuals with opportunities to generate economic growth to develop a sustainable future in the Midlands. Educational and coaching services provided include: child care development, micro-business, micro-lending, and financial education. If awarded the grant funding with the Refugee Family Child Care Microenterprise Development (RFCCMED), through internal capacity and partnerships, refugee participants will receive training and technical assistance in professional child care, microenterprise development, and financial literacy; assist refugee participants in navigating the child care licensing process; and provide direct financial assistance as needed to enable participants to prepare their homes for child care business operation. The three main objectives of RFCCMED are: (1) help refugees to achieve economic self-sufficiency by establishing licensed family child care (FCC) businesses, (2) help refugee families gain access to licensed FCC businesses that will meet the early care and developmental needs of refugee children, and (3) assist refugees in learning how to navigate mainstream child care services.

- Early Childhood Business Collaboratory Team: The team consists of representative from the Lead Agency CCDF/Subsidy program, local early childhood collaborative and professional development coordinator, a statewide shared services provider, a private philanthropist, two representatives from a statewide public-private organization providing technical assistance to child care providers utilizing CCDF and communities using private dollars to increase accessibility to leaders from our state's QRIS, Department of Education-Office of Early Childhood, Nebraska AEYC-TEACH, policy entities, and small business development support services providers. The ECE Business Collaboratory is a unique opportunity to consider actions that are promising practices for achieving long term economic sustainability for child care providers and the families they serve. The team has developed a work plan with the following strategies to support and strengthen child care business practices: 1) Conduct a landscape analysis and inventory existing resources and services; 2) Connect resources, including new CCDF regulations, with current and future early care and education providers; 3) Develop and implement Early Learning Scholarships; 4) Coordinate with other statewide groups supporting early care and education providers; i.e., NeAEYC, Step Up to Quality, Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Commission.

The Lead Agency also partners Early Head Start programs and other child serving programs to support with collaboration and CCDF funding other quality initiative across Nebraska. This partnership builds upon the experiences and knowledge gained through the various pilot projects, planning efforts, and research to offer an option to Nebraska families, children, and early care and education providers which assists in supporting healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development in the child's natural environment. These initiative are intended to build the capacity of both early childhood and mental health professionals, with enhanced

ability to address the challenging behaviors and life circumstances of young children.

1.7 Coordination With Local or Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Systems

Lead Agencies may use CCDF funds to establish or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral (CCR&R) organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined by the state/territory, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization (such as a statewide CCR&R network) (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii); 98.52).

- If Lead Agencies use CCDF funds for local CCR&R organizations, the local or regional CCR&R organizations supported by those funds must, at the direction of the Lead Agency, provide parents in the State with consumer education information concerning the full range of child care options (including faith-based and community-based child care providers), analyzed by provider, including child care provided during non-traditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their area.
- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance to offer the families support and assistance to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting that suits their needs and one that is of high quality (as determined by the Lead Agency).
- Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in areas of the state and submit the information to the State;
- Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the state and, as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the state Lead Agency and local agencies that administer funds made available through CCDF (98.52(b)).

Nothing in the statute or rule prohibits States from using CCR&R agencies to conduct or provide additional services beyond those required by statute or rule.

Note: Use 1.7.1 to address if a state/territory funds a CCR&R organization, what services are provided and how it is structured and use section 7.6.1 to address the indicators of progress met by CCR&R organizations if they are funded by quality set-aside funds.

1.7.1 Does the Lead Agency fund a system of local or regional CCR&R organizations?

No. The state/territory does not fund a CCR&R organization(s) and has no plans to establish one.

Yes. The state/territory funds a CCR&R system. If yes, describe the following:

a) What services are provided through the CCR&R organization?

The CCR&R provides information and resources to families looking for child care. The CCR&R operates a toll-free information line out of the Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC). The staff of the CCR&R toll free information line assists callers in finding licensed child care which meets their needs. Callers to the CCR&R resource line are asked questions to help refine the search. The information provided then covers the options for child care that is offered evenings, overnights, and weekends, (non-traditional times), any information about the provider's knowledge and resources for providing for children with disabilities, and whether or not the provider accepts child care subsidy. There are very few emergency child care providers in the state. The CCR&R does provide information on drop-in care as is it reported by the provider to the CCR&R. The CCR&R keeps records which are included in the quarterly report to the lead agency about the number of calls, breakdown by location (parent, provider, service provider, other), the purpose of the call broken down by topic. Topics include: The call is also recorded based on the service provided (phone consultation only, phone consultation including assistance with the online data system, whether a mailed provider list was requested, and whether additional materials regarding tips for choosing appropriate child care was distributed to the caller. The CCR&R tracks consumers access to licensed child care and inquiries in which childcare requests and needs cannot be satisfied by the current supply in the requestor's community. The regional Early Learning Connection Partnerships (ELCs) operate on a local/regional level and provide parent focused training, family engagement training for early education professionals, and marketing training for child care providers to ensure that they can reach families with appropriate information about available child care

openings. The ELC's partner at a regional level with community based) providers, faith based providers, school-based programs, and Head Start. Representatives from these programs are active on ELC regional partnership groups. ELC's also know and understand their region of the state. They are sometimes able to either work directly with providers who are not licensed, or they work with local groups who provide outreach to the unlicensed providers and work to get the programs to become either licensed or assist them to become license exempt. Both ECTC and ELC staff provide information regarding high quality care and assist families in understanding what to ask prospective providers. The CCR&R and ELCs work collaboratively with Planning Regions Teams funding by federal IDEA dollars and managed by the NDE office of Special Education. Planning Region Teams are tasked with ensuring that young children with disabilities are identified and receive the appropriate services which include child care.

b) How are CCR&R services organized, include how many agencies, if there is a statewide network and if the system is coordinated?

The system is led from the Early Childhood Training Center. The Early Childhood Training Center operates with a combination of Federal CCDF funds, Federal IDEA funds, and state funds. The CCR&R staff are paid with Federal CCDF funds. The 7 Early Learning Connection Partnerships are located in Educational Service Units across the state. The ELC's operate with Federal CCDF funds supplemented by a variety of local funding sources. The CCDF funds are granted to the ESUs by through an interagency MOU between the Lead Agency and the Nebraska Department of Education. The Early Childhood Training Center staff and the ELC coordinators have four face to face meetings annually. Additionally, the ECTC staff and the ELC coordinators have virtual (zoom) meetings approximately monthly.

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

Lead Agencies are required to establish a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan (658E(c)(2)(U)). They must demonstrate how they will address the needs of children including the need for safe child care, before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as defined by Section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and

b) Check, where applicable, the procedures used to conduct outreach for children experiencing homelessness (as defined by CCDF Rule) and their families.

- Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Partnering with homeless service providers, McKinney-Vento liaisons, and others who work with families experiencing homelessness to provide referrals to child care
- Other

Note: The Lead Agency shall pay any amount owed to a child care provider for services provided as a result of the initial eligibility determination, and any CCDF payment made prior to the final eligibility determination shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.51(a)(1)(ii)).

3.2.6 Lead Agencies must establish a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care to receive CCDF assistance while providing their families with a reasonable time to take any necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements (as described in section 5). The length of such a grace period shall be established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)(I); 98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)).

Note:

Any payment for such a child during the grace period shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(2)).

a) Describe procedures to provide a grace period to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements, including how the length of the grace period was established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency for:

Children experiencing homelessness (as defined by Lead Agency's CCDF)

Currently, all children have a 30 day grace period from the child's enrollment to provide a copy of the child's immunization record. Providers can direct families to the Lead Agency's Immunization Program website, with web pages specific for Child Care and for Children. Resources are available on the website and direct contact to the Immunization Program is also available.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

392 NAC 3-011

Children who are in foster care.

Within 30 days of a child's enrollment, the provider must obtain a copy of the child's immunization record. Providers may be exempt of this requirement if the child's parent objects to immunization on religious grounds or if the child's health would be harmed by immunization and this is certified by a physician, certified nurse practitioner, or a physician assistant.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

392 NAC 3-011

b) Describe how the Lead Agency coordinates with licensing agencies and other relevant state, territorial, tribal, and local agencies to provide referrals and support to help families with children receiving services during a grace period comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(4)).

Currently, all children have a 30 day grace period from the child's enrollment to provide a copy of the child's immunization record.

c) Does the Lead Agency establish grace periods for other children who are not experiencing homelessness or in foster care?

No.

Yes.

Describe:

All children have a 30 day grace period from the child's enrollment to provide a copy of the child's immunization record.

3.3 Protection for Working Families

3.3.1 12-Month eligibility.

The Lead Agency is required to establish a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination period, regardless of changes in income (as long as the income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85 percent of the state median income) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or educational activities (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) and (ii)).

This change means that a Lead Agency may not terminate CCDF assistance during the 12-month period if a family has an increase in income that exceeds the state's income eligibility threshold, but not the federal threshold of 85 percent of SMI. The Lead Agency may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the 12-month period if a family experiences a temporary job loss or a temporary change in participation in a training or educational activity. A temporary change in eligible activity includes, at a minimum, any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to such reasons as the need to care for a family member or an illness; any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working; any student holiday or break for a parent participating in a training or educational program; any reduction in work, training, or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending a training or educational program; any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or educational program that does not exceed 3 months or a longer period of time established by the Lead Agency; a child turning 13 years old during the 12-month eligibility period (except as described in 3.1.1); and any changes in residency within the state, territory, or tribal service area.

a) Describe the Lead Agency's policies and procedures in implementing the minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination requirements, including when a family experiences a temporary change in activity.

Current policies are pending regulatory approval.

b) How does the Lead Agency define "temporary change?"

Temporary change may include but are not limited to: temporary job loss, absence from employment due to extended medical leave or changes in seasonal work schedule, time between semesters for enrolled training or educational program, sick leave, parental leave, reduction in hours, holiday or school breaks, change in age and change in residency within the state.

c) Provide the citation for this policy and/or procedure.

Current Procedures given to field staff include: TEMPORARY CHANGE: If a parent is employed or enrolled in and regularly attending vocational or educational training, including job training and a temporary change occurs, the child remains eligible for child care during these times. The temporary change cannot exceed three months. Examples of a temporary change include:

- 1.) Time limited absences from work or training;
- 2.) Sick leave;
- 3.) Parental leave;
- 4.) Reduction in hours;
- 5.) Holiday or school breaks; and
- 6.) Other pauses in work or training.

All authorizations for employment, vocational or educational training or job training must indicate the following in the description: "BILL ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT FOR THE TIME THE CHILD ATTENDS. THE DEPT. WILL PAY ONLY FOR THE AMOUNT OF HOURS APPROVED ABOVE. CARE MAY CONTINUE AS AUTHORIZED DURING A TEMPORARY CHANGE."

3.3.2 Option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period.

Lead Agencies have the option, but are not required, to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program, otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity (i.e., if the parent experiences a temporary change in his or her status as working or participating in a training or educational program, as described in section 3.3.1 of the plan).

If the Lead Agency chooses the option to discontinue assistance due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity, it must continue assistance at least at the same level for a period of not fewer than 3 months after each such loss or cessation for the parent to engage in a job search and to resume work or resume attendance in a job training or educational program. At the end of the minimum 3-month period of continued assistance, if the parent has engaged in a qualifying work, training, or educational program activity with an income below 85 percent of SMI, assistance cannot be terminated, and the child must continue receiving assistance until the next scheduled redetermination or, at the Lead Agency option, for

an additional minimum 12-month eligibility period.

a) Does the Lead Agency choose to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity and offer a minimum 3-month period to allow parents to engage in a job search and to resume participation in an eligible activity?

No, the state/territory does not allow this option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program.

Yes, the Lead Agency discontinues assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of eligible activity and provides a minimum 3-month period of job search. If yes:

i. Provide a summary describing the Lead Agency's policies and procedures for discontinuing assistance due to a parent's non-temporary change:

If a parent would report a non-temporary change, the child care would close allowing a 10 day notice. Current regulations only allow 2 months of job search. Pending regulations, once passed, will allow 3 months of job search.

ii. Describe what specific actions/changes trigger the job-search period.

Report of loss of employment obtained from the client.

iii. How long is the job-search period (must be at least 3 months)?

Pending regulations, once approved, will allow for 3 months of job search. Current regulations only allow for 2 months job search.

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

Current regulations can be found at 392 NAC 3-008.01.

b) The Lead Agency may discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination in the following limited circumstances. Check and describe any circumstances in which the Lead Agency chooses to discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination. Check all that apply.

Not applicable.

Excessive unexplained absences despite multiple attempts by the Lead Agency or designated entity to contact the family and provider, including the prior notification of a possible discontinuation of assistance.

i. Define the number of unexplained absences identified as excessive:

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

- A change in residency outside of the state, territory, or tribal service area.

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

Regulations at 392 NAC 3-004 requires the client to be a resident of Nebraska to be eligible for services.

- Substantiated fraud or intentional program violations that invalidate prior determinations of eligibility.

Describe the violations that lead to discontinued assistance and provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

Intentional Program Violation (IPV): Any action by an individual to intentionally: A) Make a false statement, either verbally or in writing, to obtain benefits to which the individual is not entitled; B) Conceal information to obtain benefits to which the individual is not entitled; or C) Alter one or more documents to obtain benefits to which the individual is not entitled. Policy citation is 392 NAC 3-013.

3.3.3 Change reporting during the 12-month eligibility period.

The Lead Agency must describe the requirements for parents to report changes in circumstances during the 12-month eligibility period and describe efforts to ensure that such requirements do not place an undue burden on eligible families, which could impact the continuity of care for children and stability for families receiving CCDF services (98.16(h)(1)).

Note: Responses should exclude reporting requirements for a graduated phase-out, which were described in question 3.1.7(b).

Families are required to report a change to the Lead Agency at any time during the 12-month eligibility period if the family's income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income, taking into account irregular fluctuations in income (98.21(e)(1)). If the Lead Agency chooses the option to terminate assistance, as described in section 3.3.2 of the plan, they may require

families to report a non-temporary change (as described in section 3.3.3 of the plan) in work, training or educational activities (otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity).

a) Does the Lead Agency require families to report a non-temporary change in a parent's eligible activity?

No

Yes

b) Any additional reporting requirements during the 12-month eligibility period must be limited to items that impact a family's eligibility (e.g., income changes over 85 percent of SMI or that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family or pay the child care providers (e.g., a family's change of address, a change in the parent's choice of child care provider).

Check and describe any additional reporting requirements required by the Lead Agency during the 12-month eligibility period. Check all that apply.

Additional changes that may impact a family's eligibility during the 12-month period.

Describe:

Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family.

Describe:

If the family has changed residences and this impacts the agency to properly pay for subsidy authorization the family will need to contact the Lead Agency for appropriate changes to made.

Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to pay child care providers.

Describe:

The Lead Agency's ability to pay the provider impacts subsidy eligibility as the Lead Agency issues payments directly to the provider for authorized services.

Any additional reporting requirements that the Lead Agency chooses, as its option to require from parents during the 12-month eligibility period, shall not require an office visit. In addition, the Lead Agency must offer a range of notification options to accommodate families.

c) How does the Lead Agency allow for families to report changes to ensure that reporting requirements are not burdensome and to avoid an impact on continued eligibility between redeterminations? Check all that apply.

- Phone
- Email
- Online forms
- Extended submission hours
- Postal Mail
- FAX
- In-person submission
- Other.

Describe:

d) Families must have the option to voluntarily report changes on an ongoing basis during the 12-month eligibility period. Lead Agencies are required to act on information reported by the family if it will reduce the family's co-payment or increase the family's subsidy. Lead Agencies are prohibited from acting on information reported by the family that would reduce the family's subsidy unless the information reported indicates that the family's income exceeds 85 percent of SMI after considering irregular fluctuations in income or, at the option of the Lead Agency, the family has experienced a non-temporary change in eligible activity.

i. Describe any other changes that the Lead Agency allows families to report.

Families are allowed to report any changes at any time.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

392 NAC 1-004

3.3.4 Prevent the disruption of employment, education, or job training activities

Lead Agencies are required to have procedures and policies in place to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving assistance under the TANF program) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment, education, or job training activities to comply with the Lead Agency's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility for assistance (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii); 98.21(d)).

Examples include developing strategies to inform families and their providers of an upcoming redetermination and the information that will be required of the family, pre-populating subsidy renewal forms, having parents confirm that the information is accurate, and/or asking only for the information necessary to make an eligibility redetermination. In addition, states and territories can offer a variety of family-friendly methods for submitting documentation for eligibility redetermination that considers the range of needs for families in accessing support (e.g. use of languages other than English, access to transportation, accommodation of parents working non-traditional hours, etc.).

a) Identify, where applicable, the Lead Agency's procedures and policies to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving TANF program funds) do not have their employment, education, or job training unduly disrupted to comply with the state/territory's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility.

- Advance notice to parents of pending redetermination
- Advance notice to providers of pending redetermination
- Pre-populated subsidy renewal form
- Online documentation submission
- Cross-program redeterminations
- Extended office hours (evenings and/or weekends)
- Other.

Describe:

b) How are families allowed to submit documentation, described in 3.1.9, for redetermination? Check all that apply.

- Postal Mail
- Email
- Online forms
- FAX
- In-person submission
- Extended submission hours
- Other.

Describe:

Families can take a picture on their smart phone of the required documentation and

reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

Establish checks and balances to ensure program integrity

Describe:

Program Accuracy Specialist (PAS), frontline supervisors, and CCDF Program Specialists review several child care cases monthly. PAS and CCDF staff have monthly meetings discussing trends in errors, policies and procedures. The CCDF policy unit also reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

Use supervisory reviews to ensure accuracy in eligibility determination

Describe:

Program Accuracy Specialist (PAS), frontline supervisors, and CCDF Program Specialists review several child care cases monthly. PAS and CCDF staff have monthly meetings discussing trends in errors, policies and procedures. The CCDF policy unit also reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

Other

Describe:

Submit overpayment referrals to Issuance and Collections and fraud referrals to Special Investigation Unit for a thorough review.

8.1.4 Lead Agencies conduct a wide variety of activities to fight fraud and ensure program integrity. Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud and other program violations to ensure program integrity. Program violations can include both intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations, as defined by the Lead Agency. These violations and errors, identified through the error-rate review process may result in payment or nonpayment (administrative) errors and may or may not be the result of fraud, based on the Lead Agency definition. Check and describe any activities that the Lead Agency conducts to ensure program integrity.

a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent fraud or intentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of fraud and intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

- Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS)).

Describe

Nebraska will track the number of programs participating in Step Up to Quality and will measure the number of programs that move up at least one quality level.

- Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

Nebraska currently runs monthly system reports that flag co-payments being paid, transportation units being paid and providers that make an excess of \$250,000 per Fiscal year. This allows monitoring and timely actions and/or corrections to be made.

- Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows actions to be taken to correct issues before they become an ongoing problem.

- Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Program Accuracy Specialist (PAS), frontline supervisors, and CCDF Program Specialists review several child care cases monthly. PAS and CCDF staff have monthly meetings discussing trends in errors, policies and procedures. The CCDF policy unit also reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

- Audit provider records.

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and

attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows the correction of issues before they become an ongoing issues.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Eligibility staff are trained on program requirements at new hire and as needed by Supervisory Staff. Resource Development staff also receive new employee training and ongoing training as needed. Audit results are shared with all staff that work the CC program so that they are aware of what audit issues have become larger concerns.

Other

Describe:

b) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Describe:

Nebraska currently uses on Eligibility system that houses: TANF, SNAP, LIHEAP, AABD/SSAD. We also receive alerts for information from State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System. This allows review to see what benefits the household is receiving and who is residing in the household.

Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

Nebraska currently runs monthly system reports that flag co-payments being paid, transportation units being paid and providers that make an excess of \$250,000 per Fiscal year. This allows monitoring and timely actions and/or corrections to be made.

Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows us to correct issues before they become an ongoing problem.

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Program Accuracy Specialist (PAS), frontline supervisors, and CCDF Program Specialists review several child care cases monthly. PAS and CCDF staff have monthly meetings discussing trends in errors, policies and procedures. The CCDF policy unit also reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

Audit provider records.

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows us to correct issues before they become an ongoing problem.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Eligibility staff are trained on program requirements at new hire and as needed by Supervisory Staff. Resource Development staff also receive new employee training and ongoing training as needed. Audit results are shared with all staff that work the CC program so that they are aware of what audit issues have become larger concerns.

Other

Describe:

c) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent agency errors. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of agency errors.

- [Share/match data from other programs \(e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid\) or other databases \(e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS\).](#)

Describe:

Nebraska currently uses on Eligibility system that houses: TANF, SNAP, LIHEAP, AABD/SSAD. We also receive alerts for information from State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System. This allows us to see what benefits the household is receiving and who is residing in the household.

- [Run system reports that flag errors \(include types\).](#)

Describe:

Nebraska currently runs monthly system reports that flag co-payments being paid, transportation units being paid and providers that make an excess of \$250,000 per Fiscal year. This allows us to monitor and act accordingly.

- [Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records](#)

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows us to correct issues before they become an ongoing problem.

- [Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.](#)

Describe:

Program Accuracy Specialist (PAS), frontline supervisors, and CCDF Program Specialists review several child care cases monthly. PAS and CCDF staff have monthly meetings discussing trends in errors, policies and procedures. The CCDF policy unit also reviews trends in policy questions, which helps identify if additional training or policy/process tips are needed.

- [Audit provider records.](#)

Describe:

Nebraska Policy Staff and Resource Development staff will review billing and attendance records on a regular basis to ensure program integrity. This allows us to correct issues before they become an ongoing problem.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Eligibility staff are trained on program requirements at new hire and as needed by Supervisory Staff. Resource Development staff also receive new employee training and ongoing training as needed. Audit results are shared with all staff that work the CC program so that they are aware of what audit issues have become larger concerns.

Other

Describe:

8.1.5 The Lead Agency is required to identify and recover misspent funds as a result of fraud, and it has the option to recover any misspent funds as a result of errors.

a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency uses to investigate and recover improper payments due to fraud. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payment due to fraud or intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

Currently, if a CCDF Provider has an improper payment due to fraud, Nebraska will set up a payment plan with the provider if they are not active. They have the option to pay in full or make payment arrangements.

Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

Currently, if a CCDF Provider has an improper payment due to fraud, Nebraska reduce the payment by a percentage each month until the improper payment has been paid in full. If the provider fails to make payment arrangements the entire fraud amount will be taken at the next billing cycle.

Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

Recover through other means.

Describe:

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

The Special Investigation Unit is made up of fraud investigators who will investigate the IPV or fraud, make a determination, and attempt to collect an overpayment. They will also be key witnesses in any criminal hearings relating to the IPV or fraud.

Other

Describe:

b) Check any activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

- Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

- Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

Currently, if a CCDF Provider has an improper payment due to fraud, Nebraska will set up a payment plan with the provider if they are not active. They have the option to pay in full or make payment arrangements.

- Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

Currently, if a CCDF Provider has an improper payment due to fraud, Nebraska reduce the payment by a percentage each month until the improper payment has been paid in full.

- Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

- Recover through other means.

Describe:

- Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

The Special Investigation Unit is made up of fraud investigators who will investigate the IPV or fraud, make a determination, and attempt to collect an overpayment. They will also be key witnesses in any criminal hearings relating to the IPV or fraud.

- Other

Describe:

c) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to agency errors. Include in the description how each

activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to administrative errors. Include a description of the results of such activity.

- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

- Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

- Recover through repayment plans.

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

- Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

- Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

- Recover through other means.

Describe:

- Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

- Other

Describe:

Nebraska does not act on or collect improper payments due to agency error.

8.1.6 What type of sanction will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations? Check and describe all that apply:

Disqualify the client. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified.

Describe:

392 NAC 3-012 Client Overpayments: The Department will attempt to recoup overpayments caused by the client's error (failure to provide information, using child care for unauthorized purpose, etc.). When the overpayment appears to be the result of fraud, the case will be referred to the Special Investigation Unit, Central Office, or the Omaha Special Investigation Unit for Omaha cases. 392 NAC 3-013 Intentional Program Violation (IPV): Effective January 1, 2004, an individual who is found to have committed IPV is disqualified according to the following regulations. 392 NAC 3-013.01 Disqualification Hearing: A disqualification hearing will be initiated by the Central Office whenever sufficient documentary evidence has been established to substantiate that a household member has committed one or more acts of intentional program violation. An intentional program violation consists of any action by an individual to purposely:

1. Make a false statement to the local office, either verbally or in writing, to obtain benefits to which the household is not entitled;
2. Conceal information to obtain benefits to which the household is not entitled; or
3. Alter one or more documents to obtain benefits to which the household is not entitled.

The worker must inform the household in writing of the disqualification penalties for committing IPV each time the household applies for benefits. The penalties are listed in clear and prominent lettering on the application form or attachment

Disqualify the provider. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified.

Describe:

If Child Care providers breach their Subsidy agreement, they may lose the ability to be a Subsidy provider for 10 years. Child care providers do not have the right to appeal Department decisions, except when an overpayment has been assessed.

Prosecute criminally.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form

Lead Agencies may apply for a temporary waiver for certain background check requirements if milestone prerequisites have been fully implemented. These waivers will be considered "transitional and legislative waivers" to provide transitional relief from conflicting or duplicative requirements preventing implementation, or an extended period of time in order for the state/territory legislature to enact legislation to implement the provisions (98.19(b)(1)) These waivers are limited to a one-year period and may be extended for at most one additional year from the date of initial approval.

Approval of these waiver requests is subject to and contingent on OCC review and approval of responses in section 5 questions 5.4.1 -- 5.4.4 to confirm that the milestones are met. If milestone prerequisites are not met, the waiver request will not be approved. Approved waivers would begin October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. If approved, States and Territories will have the option to renew these waivers for one additional year as long as progress is demonstrated during the initial waiver period. Separate guidance will be issued later on the timeline and criteria for requesting the waiver renewal.

Overview of Background Check Implementation deadlines

Original deadline for implementation (658H(j)(1) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2017

Initial one-year extension deadline (658H(j)(2) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2018

One-year waiver deadline (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(i)): September 30, 2019

Waiver deadline one-year renewal (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(ii)): September 30, 2020

Waiver approval for new (prospective) staff, existing staff or staff hired provisionally until background checks are completed, are subject to and contingent upon the OCC review and approval of responses to 5.4.9 that demonstrate that the state/territory requires: (1) the provider to submit the background check request before the staff person begins working; and (2) pending the results of the background check, the staff person must be supervised at all times by an individual who has completed the background check.

assurances of the persons character for employment and to be around children.