

**MINUTES of the
Child Care Advisory
Committee
October 7, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Child Care Advisory Committee, held at the Holiday Inn, 110 S. 2nd, Kearney Nebraska, was called to order at 10:00 am. Copies of the agenda were emailed in advance to the Committee Members and posted outside the Holiday Inn Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

The following Advisory Committee members were present to answer roll call:

- Penny Gerking
- Sabrina Glynn
- Denita Julius
- Stoney Straatman
- Erin Branch
- Michele Lawson
- Adriana Chavez
- Christopher Dean
- Adela Yanez
- Sandra Kosierowski
- Lisset Christina
- Kimberly Ricker

The following Advisory Committee members were absent: Stephanie Dowding, Thelma Sims, Holly Hill, and Jean Venne
The following staff members from the Department were also present during all or part of the meeting:

- Lindsay Braddock, DHHS Public Health, Administrator-Occupational Licensure
- Amy Redden, DHHS Children and Family Services, RD Supervisor
- Rita Krusemark, DHHS Public Health, Program Specialist
- Matthew Hayden, DHHS Public Health, Program Manager

A quorum was present, and the meeting convened.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Kimberly Ricker made the motion, seconded by Penny Gerking, to adopt the agenda for the October 7, 2023, Child Care Advisory Meeting.

OPEN SESSION DISCUSSION

1. Criminal Background Check update:

Matthew Hayden provided updates of the following.

- The fee waiver for fingerprinting is currently through April 30, 2024.
- Discussed that providers must have an eligibility letter for a child care staff prior to employment, as mandated by Federal requirement.
- The Health Services Committee of the Legislature is currently discussing solutions to speed up background checks.
- The process for processing applications for previously eligible child care staff has been streamlined to allow turnaround of 1-2 days.
- Background check applications are currently processed in date order with turnaround of 12-13 days.
- Data provided:
 - Since 2019, over 40,000 background checks processed. 350 were determined ineligible.
 - September 2023, processed over 1000 applications with a 14-day turnaround. Process time can take longer at this time of year due to the volume.

- DHHS has provided informational flyers to Nebraska State Patrol sites which outline the background check process sites in order to aid understanding and avoid delays in the process.
2. CCDF Subsidy Policy and Grant Opportunities Updates:
Amy Redden provided updates of the following:
- Subsidy:
 - Rate structures were updated July 1, 2023.
 - Received Subsidy payments may not be higher than private payments, unless a child care provider is at Step Up to Quality Step 3, or higher.
 - Enrollment Billing: Nebraska is working to come into federal compliance regarding enrollment billing vs. hourly subsidy rates.
 - Grants:
 - ARPA Funds: The following grants were discussed. Number of grants and dollar amounts were provided:
 - Workforce Stipend: 5148/\$23.1 million
 - Student Loans: 1203/\$12.3 million
 - Partnership Grants (combined \$26 million)
 - 72 Startup Grants – 3,540 new child slots
 - 77 Expansion Grants – 2,216 new child slots
 - Grants have eliminated two child care deserts in Nebraska
 - Quality Support Payments were mailed out to 700 License Exempt providers.
 - Deadline to apply for Step Up to Quality grants was 9/30/23. Disbursement is January 2024.
 - Deadline to apply for Inflation Support Grant was 9/30/23. Disbursement is January 2024.
 - DHHS reached out to 300 non-responders to ensure all who qualified for funds were notified.
 - DHHS website provides links for grant information.
 - Upcoming Grants:
 - Restoration Grant
 - Technology Grant
3. Discussion and vote on creation of Subcommittees:
- Committee voted 12-0 (4 absent) to create two subcommittees:
 - Regulations, to be chaired by Kimberly Ricker
 - Supports for Nebraska Providers, to be chaired by Erin Branch
- 4.
5. Discussion and Vote on Date of Next Meeting:
Committee voted 12-0 (4 absent) to schedule the next meetings for the following dates and times:
- WebEx, Tuesday, January 23, 2024, 6:30 – 8:30PM
 - In Person, Saturday, April 13, 2024, 10AM – 2PM

CONCLUSION AND ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Penny Gerking made the motion, seconded by Denita Julius, to adjourn the meeting.