

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DIVISION OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
DIVISION OF FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

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X NOTICE DECE 10-01

ISSUE DATE: 7/29/2010

DISPOSAL DATE: 12/31/2010

To: County Human Service Directors
W-2 Directors

From: Henry Wilde,
Deputy Secretary, Division Administrator

Julie Kerksick
Division Administrator

RE: Child Care Eligibility Determination for 2011

PURPOSE

This memo provides notice that Wisconsin Shares Child Care eligibility determination functions will no longer be included in the W-2 and Related Programs contract. Effective January 1, 2011, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) plans to include this function in the county child care administration contracts. Counties will have the ability to sub-contract parts or all of the eligibility determination function to W-2 agencies if they so choose.

It is also the Department's expectation that in cases where the W-2 contract is held by a private agency, counties will collaborate with W-2 agencies to facilitate child care enrollment for W-2 participants.

BACKGROUND

Under previous Wisconsin law, Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies were required to determine eligibility for child care subsidies and to refer individuals who have been determined eligible to a county department for child care authorizations. The split responsibility for eligibility versus authorization made the process of getting child care subsidies more complicated for clients and the majority of child care subsidy clients are not W-2 participants but typically receive Food Share and BadgerCare/Medicaid benefits for which eligibility must be determined by the county Income Maintenance agency.

Wisconsin Statutes were changed in July 2009 to state that a county department or agency with which the Department contracts with to determine eligibility shall administer the contracts for child care assistance in that geographic region or for a particular Indian tribal unit. The new statutes allows DCF the flexibility to no longer require W-2 agencies to determine child care eligibility and requires that this function and administration of the Wisconsin Shares program to be included in one contract.

The Department of Children and Families' made this decision after obtaining input during recent listening sessions. The primary rationale for doing so is to operationally consolidate the child care eligibility and authorization functions in one place. Child care caseloads correspond more closely with other Income Maintenance programs, which are administered by counties, than with

participation in the W-2 program. In 2010 in the majority of counties the county IM agency already manages both eligibility and authorizations.

ACTION SUMMARY STATEMENT

Child Care eligibility will no longer be included in the W-2 and Related Programs contract effective January 1, 2011. The Division of Early Care and Education will be contracting directly with counties to determine eligibility for child care subsidies and child care administration for CY2011.

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