



Division of Early Care and Education

ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO

_____ ACTION
 X NOTICE DECE 15-02

ISSUE DATE: 03/09/2015

DISPOSAL DATE: None

To: County Human Service Departments
Tribal Social Service Directors

From: Judy Norman-Nunnery, Ph.D.
Division Administrator

**RE: Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Agency Program Compliance
Review Process**

PURPOSE

This memo describes the process to review administration of the Shares child care subsidy program by agencies under contract with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to operate the Shares program. Agencies will be reviewed using the attached Child Care Agency Subsidy Review Tool. Reviews of county programs will begin in early CY 2015. Reviews of tribal programs will begin at a later date.

The Child Care Subsidy Agency Review process is a joint effort between the Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO) and the Bureau of Operations and Planning (BOP) to monitor agencies for compliance with Shares requirements, improve achievement of Shares performance standards, and provide technical assistance to agencies to ensure effective operation of the Shares program.

BACKGROUND

The DCF manages Wisconsin Shares, the child care subsidy program for low-income working families. To provide child care subsidies to customers, the DCF contracts with county and tribal agencies to determine eligibility and issue authorizations to child care recipients and issue payments to child care providers. The DCF also contracts with counties and tribes to certify child care providers to receive Shares payments.

Pursuant to the Child Care Administration Contract Agreement, the DCF will monitor the local agency's general compliance with the terms of the contract on a periodic basis. The DCF reserves the right to monitor all aspects of Shares program operation including:

- Adherence to terms of the base contract and child care scope of services
- Compliance with Shares program requirements
- Achievement of program performance standards
- Use of Child Care Administration funds
- Customer satisfaction with the quality of service provided

The review process was developed in collaboration with local agencies providing input to the scope of agency reviews and specific content of the Child Care Agency Review tool. The review process was piloted with several agencies during 2014 and DCF consulted with the Economic Support Policy Advisory Committee (ES PAC) of the Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA).

REVIEW TOOL AND PROCESS

The review process includes the following elements:

- DCF desk reviews of program performance and improvement areas.
- Agency completion of certain sections in the Child Care Agency Review tool in advance of an on-site visit.
- In-person interviews by DCF staff of agency staff.
- A monitoring report identifying findings or recommendations requiring action by the agency.

The Child Care Subsidy Agency Review tool includes the following elements:

- Agency profile including agency structure, hours of operation, staffing and Shares caseload.
- Performance on Shares program performance standards and other performance measures.
- Agency quality assurance activities.
- Agency program integrity activities.
- Agency handling of formal complaints from customers.
- Civil rights compliance.
- Staff training.
- Confidentiality, system security and record security.
- Purchase of child care services (if applicable).
- Agency best practices.
- Support needed from DCF.

Agencies will be reviewed every three years, with the reviews scheduled by BRO child care coordinators at the agency's convenience. The BRO child care coordinator will work with the agency to conduct the various elements of the review process. Upon completion of the review, the agency will receive a written report with the results of the review including any findings of non-compliance with Shares program requirements and any recommendations for program improvement.

Reports will be issued within 30 days of all information being collected from the desk review, on-site visit and other contacts with the agency. The agency must respond to the monitoring report within 30 days. If the agency must take action to address findings or recommendations, the BRO child care coordinator will work with the agency to develop an Action Plan to address the findings and recommendations.

Action Plans will be reviewed by the BOP quality assurance specialists to assess the proposed actions and identify training or technical assistance that can be provided to the agency. If a serious problem is identified, the agency may be directed to take immediate corrective action as specified in the Child care Administration contract. The BRO child care coordinator in collaboration with the BOP staff will provide consultation and technical assistance to agencies as they implement their Action Plans and any Corrective Actions.

Local agencies are encouraged to use the Child Care Agency Review Tool to conduct local quality assurance and prepare for agency reviews.

Counties and tribes will continue to be reviewed for their child care provider certification programs, as explained in DECE Administrator's Memo 2012-02. The BRO will generally conduct the Certification and Child Care Subsidy Agency Reviews in the same year, if possible. The BRO child care coordinator will work with the agency to determine how to coordinate the two review processes.

ACTION SUMMARY STATEMENT

The BRO will begin conducting Child Care Subsidy Agency Reviews of counties in CY 2015. The reviews will result in monitoring reports to agencies with findings and recommendations and a requirement to develop Action Plans or Corrective Actions as necessary. Agencies are encouraged to examine the review tool and contact their BRO child care coordinator if they have questions.

CONTACT:

Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO), Child Care Regional Coordinators. Contact information is located at: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/regionaloperations>

Attachment:

Child Care Subsidy Agency Review Tool