



# Child Care Provider and Participant Handbook

Community Services Programs  
Resource and Referral

Child Care Subsidy Programs  
California Alternative Payment Program  
CalWORKs Stages 1, 2, & 3

Effective October 2018

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Resource and Referral .....   | 4  |
| Oliver's Law.....   | 4  |
| Provision of child care referrals to parents/guardians .....                | 5  |
| Requirements to participate in the Child Care Links Referral Database ..... | 5  |
| Resource and Referral Complaint Policy .....                                | 5  |
| Suspension of Child Care Provider Services.....                             | 6  |
| Child Care Subsidy Program – Parental Choice .....                          | 7  |
| Child Care Links Service Area .....   | 7  |
| Confidentiality.....  | 7  |
| Reporting Changes .....   | 8  |
| The Family's Right to Voluntarily Report Changes.....                       | 8  |
| Eligibility List for Services.....  | 8  |
| Conduct Policy .....  | 8  |
| Description of Subsidized Child Care Programs .....                         | 9  |
| California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP) .....                         | 9  |
| CalWORKs Stage 1 (CDSS) .....   | 9  |
| CalWORKs Stage 2 (C2AP).....  | 9  |
| CalWORKs Stage 3 (C3AP).....  | 9  |
| Alameda County Pilot Program (ACPP).....                                    | 9  |
| Eligibility for Subsidized Child Care Programs .....                        | 10 |
| Need for Subsidized Child Care Programs .....                               | 10 |
| Application Process.....  | 12 |
| Recertification/Maintaining Eligibility .....                               | 12 |
| Types of Child Care Providers .....   | 12 |
| State Licensed Child Care Centers .....                                     | 12 |
| License-Exempt Center-Based Child Care.....                                 | 13 |
| State Licensed Family Child Care Home .....                                 | 13 |
| License-Exempt Child Care (relative and non-relative).....                  | 13 |
| TrustLine .....   | 13 |
| Child Care Provider Eligibility for Participation in Subsidy Programs ..... | 14 |
| Licensed Child Care Providers.....  | 15 |
| License-Exempt Child Care Providers .....                                   | 16 |
| In-Home Licensed Exempt Child Care .....                                    | 17 |
| Child Care Provider Rates.....  | 17 |
| Establishing Certificate Agreements .....                                   | 18 |
| Terminating Parent/Provider Agreements (Licensed Care Only) .....           | 19 |
| Documentation of Child Care: Attendance Sheets .....                        | 20 |
| Child Care Subsidy Reimbursement Process .....                              | 20 |
| Compliance with Attendance Sheet Guidelines.....                            | 21 |
| Absence/Holiday/Days of Non-Operation Policies .....                        | 21 |
| For Licensed Child Care Only .....  | 21 |
| Excused Absences: Stage 1 Only .....  | 21 |
| Best Interest Days (10): Stage 1 Only.....                                  | 21 |
| Unexcused Absences: Stage 1 Only.....                                       | 22 |
| Days of Non-Operation (Holidays): .....                                     | 22 |
| Licensed Providers only - All programs.....                                 | 22 |
| Alternative Hours for School-Age Children.....                              | 22 |
| Temporary Suspension of Services .....                                      | 22 |
| Family Fees.....  | 22 |
| Family Fee Billing.....   | 23 |
| Delinquent Fees .....   | 23 |
| Fraud Policy .....  | 24 |
| Suspension and Removal of Participants from Child Care Links Programs.....  | 24 |
| Suspension and Removal of Child Care Providers from .....                   | 24 |
| Child Care Links Programs .....   | 24 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Participants Reinstatement Policies .....                         | 25 |
| Child Care Providers Reinstatement Policies.....                  | 25 |
| Client Grievance Policy .....                                     | 25 |
| Participant Appeal Information .....                              | 26 |
| Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice (UPC) (For CDE<br>only) ..... | 26 |

## Resource and Referral

### Description of Services

Child Care Links connects parents/guardians and families with local Child Care Providers and community services and resources. Resource and Referral Specialists provide information on choosing quality child care, as well as other parental/guardian resources.

### Resource and Referral Policies

Child Care Links offers free Child Care Resource and Referral information to parents/guardians seeking child care in the cities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, and Sunol. Services are available at a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week with a Resource and Referral Specialist. Parents/guardians are given information on a full range of child care options to make informed choices when selecting child care. Child Care Links supports parental choice child care.

**Child Care Links provides referrals, not recommendations. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to screen, interview, and select child care which will best suit the needs of their child(ren) and family.**

Child Care Links Resource and Referral Specialists are available Monday–Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Wednesday 8:00 am – 7:00 pm. Parents/guardian can request referrals by calling **925.417.8733**, or by accessing the Child Care Links website at **[www.childcarelinks.org](http://www.childcarelinks.org)**

### Oliver’s Law

As a parent/guardians, you have the right to receive information about any and all substantiated or inconclusive complaints about a Child Care Provider. This information is public and can be obtained by calling or visiting the Community Care Licensing office or website listed below.

To get more information on any child care facility, including details about citations, call the local Regional Office at the main phone number listed below. This site contains five years’ of information on child care facilities. **Do not rely on this information alone to make important decisions regarding child care facilities.** Visit them in person to ensure that the facility will be suitable for your child(ren) and family.

State Law requires Licensed Child Care Facilities to make all licensing reports documenting facility visits or substantiated complaint investigations accessible to the public. In addition, a more complete file regarding a child care licensee may be available at the State Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. You have legal rights to access any public information from these files.

### Community Care Licensing

510.622.2602 Main Line  
844.538.8766 Facility History Information  
844.538.8766 Complaint Hotline  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1102  
Oakland, CA 94612  
**[www.secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/](http://www.secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/)**

## **Provision of child care referrals to parents/guardians**

- I. Child Care Resource and Referral services are provided to all parents/guardians free of charge, regardless of income, age, race, religion, national origin, color, ethnic group identification, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender or mental or physical disability.
- II. Child Care Referrals are confidential.
- III. Resource and Referral Specialists ask parents/guardians about their child care needs pertaining to the type of care, location, hours, ages of the child(ren), and the need for special accommodations.
- IV. Child Care Referrals are given based on the parent's/guardian's need for information.
- V. When possible, at least four (4) child care referrals matching the given criteria are provided. To ensure confidentiality of the Child Care Provider, addresses are not released.
- VI. Parents/guardians are informed that they may access information about any Licensed Child Care Provider by contacting the State of California Department of Social Services,

### **Community Care Licensing**

**510.622.2602 or [www.secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/](http://www.secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/)**

Child Care Links provides a full range of child care services that include, but not limited to, State Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes, State Preschool Programs, and Head Start Programs.

## **Requirements to participate in the Child Care Links Referral Database**

- I. Family Child Care Homes must have a valid facility license issued by Community Care Licensing.
- II. Child Care Centers or License Exempt Center-Based Programs must have a valid facility license issued by Community Care Licensing or be legally exempt from licensing.
- III. All child care facilities must be located within the cities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, or Sunol.

## **All Child Care Providers must complete the following requirements to be added to the Child Care Links Referral Database**

- I. Provide a copy of a current license issued by Community Care Licensing.
- II. Complete a Child Care Provider Intake Appointment with a Resource and Referral Specialist, and provide program information. (i.e. type of program, hours of service, ages of children served, fees/eligibility for services)
- III. Complete a Quarterly Update Form provided by Child Care Links. If Child Care Links does not receive a Quarterly Update Form, the Child Care Provider's name will not be given as a child care referral until an updated form is received.
- IV. Update Child Care Links with facility vacancies as they occur.

## **Resource and Referral Complaint Policy**

- I. The confidentiality of the calling party is protected.
- II. When a parent/guardian or community member calls Child Care Links with a complaint regarding a dispute or disagreement, Child Care Links staff will encourage the caller to discuss the complaint directly with the Child Care Provider or parent/guardian. Child

Care Links staff is not authorized to offer any advice to Child Care Providers or parents/guardians that may be construed as legal advice.

- III. If appropriate, the caller is encouraged to contact Community Care Licensing at **510.622.2602**.
- IV. Child Care Links does not notify Community Care Licensing of complaints unless the staff at Child Care Links has physically witnessed a licensing infraction, in which there is an immediate risk to the health and safety or personal rights of children in care. Examples include lack of care and supervision, access to bodies of water, access to dangerous chemicals, etc.
- V. Complaints regarding physical or sexual abuse, neglect, and/or using, selling or manufacturing of drugs will be handled as follows:
  - a. The complainant will be asked to make a report to Community Care Licensing and, if necessary, the local police department.
  - b. The staff at Child Care Links will follow-up within two (2) calendar days to verify the status of a complaint. If no report was made, the staff at Child Care Links will file a complaint based on original information reported.
- VI. Based on the investigation and findings of Community Care Licensing, Child Care Links will temporarily or permanently suspend Child Care Referrals for said Child Care Provider.

### **Suspension of Child Care Provider Services**

Child Care Links will notify all State Subsidy Programs in instances when Community Care Licensing has issued a Probationary License, a Temporary Suspension Order, or a Revocation within 2 business days. Regulations require parental notification, and in some instances, immediate removal of subsidized children.

- I. **Probationary License:** Child Care Providers will be placed on a “no referral” status when they receive a Probationary License. Parents/guardians of any state-subsidized children will be notified.
- II. **Temporary Suspension Order (TSO):** Child Care Providers will be placed on a “no referral” status when they receive a Temporary Suspension Order (TSO). The Child Care Provider will remain on a “no referral” status until Community Care Licensing has made a decision. Parents/guardians of any state-subsidized children will be notified to remove their child(ren) immediately and choose another Child Care Provider if state subsidy is to continue.
- III. **Revocation of License:** The Child Care Provider will be removed from referral files. Parents/guardians of any state-subsidized child(ren) will be notified to remove their child(ren) immediately and to choose another Child Care Provider if state subsidy is to continue.

Any Child Care Provider who feels they have been unfairly placed on “no referral” status has the right to appeal. A letter from the Child Care Provider documenting and supporting their case must be submitted to Child Care Links within fifteen (15) business days.

Appeal letters should be addressed to:

Chief Executive Officer  
Child Care Links  
6601 Owens Drive, Suite 100  
Pleasanton, CA 94588

All Child Care Providers and parents/guardians have a right to the best available community resources. Child Care Links provides support in the areas of quality child care program

operations, child development training and workshops, program management techniques and services, and technical assistance.

Child Care Links encourages all Child Care Facilities to provide smoke-free environments.

## Child Care Subsidy Program – Parental Choice

State and federally funded subsidized child care programs exist to assist low-income families with financial resources to find and afford quality child care for their children. Alternative Payment (AP) Programs and the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Child Care Programs offer a choice of child care arrangements for parents/guardians, such as Licensed Child Care Centers, Licensed Family Child Care Homes, and License-Exempt Child Care. These programs help families arrange child care services and issue reimbursements for those services directly to the Child Care Provider selected by the family.

Subsidized Child Care is intended to increase parental choice and accommodate the individual needs of the child(ren) and family. The child care subsidy follows the needs of the family, as long as the family continues to meet eligibility and service need requirements. If work hours change, the family relocates within the Child Care Links Alameda County Service Area, or a child needs a different child care setting, the participant is able to choose a new Child Care Provider.

For more information, visit the Child Care Links website [www.childcarelinks.org](http://www.childcarelinks.org), or contact your local Child Care Links office.

### Pleasanton

6601 Owens Drive  
Suite 100  
Pleasanton CA 94588  
Phone: 925.417.8733  
Fax: 925.730.4942

### Oakland

80 Swan Way  
Suite 130  
Oakland CA 94621  
Phone: 510.568.0306  
Fax: 510.568.0406

### Fremont

39155 Liberty Street,  
Suite D450  
Fremont CA 94538  
Phone: 510.270.8807

## Child Care Links Service Area

| Resource and Referral                      | CAPP At Risk and CPS  | Stage 1  | Stage 2 and Stage 3   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Dublin<br>Livermore<br>Pleasanton<br>Sunol | Dublin<br>Fremont<br>Livermore<br>Newark<br>Pleasanton<br>Sunol<br>Union City | Alameda<br>Albany<br>Berkeley<br>Dublin<br>Emeryville<br>Livermore<br>Oakland<br>Piedmont<br>Pleasanton<br>Sunol | Dublin<br>Fremont<br>Livermore<br>Newark<br>Pleasanton<br>Sunol<br>Union City |

## Confidentiality

The staff of Child Care Links will not use or disclose information concerning applicants or recipients of subsidized child care for any purpose not related to the administration of this program. Exceptions may be granted by the Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer CEO, Alameda County Investigator/District Attorney, or a request by law enforcement agencies through subpoenas.

## Reporting Changes

Families must report within thirty (30) calendar days if their adjusted monthly gross (pretax) income, adjusted for family size exceeds 85% of SMI.

*Income ceilings as of July 1, 2018*

| Family 1<br>or 2 | Family<br>3 | Family<br>4 | Family<br>5 | Family<br>6 | Family<br>7 | Family<br>8 | Family<br>9 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| \$5,067          | \$5,466     | \$6,383     | \$7,404     | \$8,426     | \$8,617     | \$8,809     | 9,000       |

## The Family's Right to Voluntarily Report Changes

Families can voluntarily report changes to reduce the family fee, increase the family's services, or extend the period of eligibility. Families may at any time voluntarily request a reduction to their service level by submitting a written request that includes: days and hours per day requested; the effective date of proposed reduction of service level; and parental acknowledge in writing that they understand that they may retain their current service level.

Upon receipt of the parent's/guardian's written request, the contractor shall notify the family in writing of the parent's right to continue to bring their child pursuant to the original certified service level, and collect documentation to support the changes requested, and, not later than 10 business days after receipt of applicable documentation, issue a Notice of Action for the requested change in service level. No other changes to the service agreement shall be made using the received information. (CDE only)

## Eligibility List for Services

As funding becomes available, families will be enrolled from the Child Care Links Eligibility List to the California Alternative Payment Program, based on priority enrollment criteria established by the California Department of Education. First priority is given to recipients of Child Protective Services (CPS), or children who are currently experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Subsequent priority is given to families who are income eligible.

## Conduct Policy

Inappropriate behavior or misconduct towards representatives of the staff at Child Care Links, or in the presence of families or Child Care Providers, is prohibited (harassing emails or voicemails, physical or emotional harassment, verbal abuse, racial slurs, and foul language, destruction of property, and threats or acts of physical violence). Child Care Links cannot identify every type of unacceptable behavior or conduct. Therefore, participants and Child Care Providers should be aware that conduct not specifically listed, but which adversely affects, or is otherwise detrimental to the interest of Child Care Links, staff, families, or Child Care Providers will not be tolerated. The existence of any one or more of these behaviors may lead to termination from all Child Care Links programs and notification to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

## Child Age Eligibility

Child(ren) who have reached their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday are ineligible to enroll in subsidized child care services. Child(ren) with exceptional needs may be served up to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. An IEP Statement, signed by a legally qualified professional, must state that the child(ren) requires the special attention of an adult in a child care setting.



## **Description of Subsidized Child Care Programs**

All subsidized child care programs administered through Child Care Links are subject to adequate funding. In addition, the guidelines for these programs are determined by the funding source and are subject to change.

### **California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP)**

Families are enrolled from the Child Care Links Eligibility List based on priorities set forth by the California Department of Education. Children who have an open Child Protective Services (CPS) case, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect are enrolled first. All other families are enrolled based on family size and income. Eligibility for services is based on the participant's need, not the child(ren's). Families are enrolled as funding becomes available.

### **CalWORKs Stage 1 (CDSS)**

CalWORKs Stage 1 services are provided in the Oakland and Pleasanton offices and are funded by the California Department of Social Services, through County Welfare Departments (CWDs). Parents/guardians must be current CalWORKs cash aid recipients or have received CalWORKs cash aid within twenty-four (24) months from the date of the application for child care services. Stage 1 begins when a family enters the CalWORKs Program, and takes part in activities based on a Welfare-to-Work plan developed by the participant and their Employment Counselor.

### **CalWORKs Stage 2 (C2AP)**

Enrollment for CalWORKs Stage 2 parents/guardians is determined by State and Federal guidelines. Parents/guardians are either currently on cash aid or have been on CalWORKs cash aid within the last twenty-four (24) months. Stage 2 is administered by the California Department of Education (CDE). Stage 1 families are transferred to Stage 2 when the County Welfare Department deems the family to be stable. Participation in Stage 1 or Stage 2 is limited to twenty-four (24) months after the participant stops receiving CalWORKs cash aid.

In Alameda County, Child Care Links and the Community Child Care Council of Alameda County (4 C's) administer the Stage 1 program. Depending on your geographical location, you may need to transfer to another agency to be served on Stage 2 or Stage 3.

### **CalWORKs Stage 3 (C3AP)**

Stage 3 is administered by CDE. A participant may transfer to this stage when they have exhausted their twenty-four (24) months off of cash aid in Stage 1, and/or Stage 2, and may remain in the program(s) for as long as the participant(s) is eligible for the child care program. Participants who are transferring to Stage 3 must be currently active in Stage 1 or Stage 2, prior to transferring to Stage 3.

### **Alameda County Pilot Program (ACPP)**

CAPP, CalWORKs Stage 2, and CalWORKs Stage 3 Programs are part of Alameda County Pilot Program in which parents'/guardians' eligibility for child care and development services is for not less than twenty-four (24) months unless they are seeking employment. Upon establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility for services, a family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for not less than twenty-four (24) months, before having their eligibility or need recertified, and shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for at least twenty-four (24) months.

## **Eligibility for Subsidized Child Care Programs**

- I. Child is receiving Child Protective Services; or
- II. A child is currently experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and the subsidized child care is needed to reduce or eliminate risk
- III. Family is homeless
- IV. Family is recipient of cash aid
- V. Family is income eligible

## **Need for Subsidized Child Care Programs**

A need for subsidized child care exists only if there is no adult in the family count available or capable of providing care for the child(ren) while adult(s) are involved in an approved activity.

The following is a list of approved activities:

- I. A child in the family is receiving Child Protective Services or the child is identified as experiencing or being at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- II. Seeking permanent housing for family stability and/or Homeless
- III. Employment or self-employed
- IV. Seeking employment
- V. Participating in vocational training leading directly to a recognized trade, paraprofessional or profession
- VI. CalWORKs/Stage 1 participants
- VII. Incapacitated (For Stage I, must be two (2) parent household)

## **At Risk Children/Child Protective Services (For CDE)**

Child(ren) that is/are identified as at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation or receiving child protective services are eligible for services with a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency or emergency shelter. Income eligibility may be waived if indicated on the referral that it is necessary to exempt the family from paying a fee, then the parent/guardian will not be required to provide documentation of total countable income.

## **Seeking Permanent Housing and/or Homeless (For CDE)**

Child care services may be provided for families seeking permanent housing and/or homeless. Documentation shall include a written parental declaration signed under penalty of perjury that the family is seeking permanent housing. The declaration shall include the parent's/guardian's search plan to secure a fixed, regular, and adequate residence and shall identify a general description of when services will be necessary. If the family is residing in a shelter, services may also be provided while the parent/guardian attends appointments or activities necessary to comply with the shelter participation requirements.

## **Employment or Self Employed**

Working parents/guardians are required to submit an independently written statement from their employer and at least one month most recent pay stubs.

Self-employed parents/guardians are required to provide a declaration of need under penalty of perjury that includes a description of the employment and an estimate of the days and hours worked per week. To demonstrate the days and hours worked, a copy of one or more of the following: appointment logs, client receipts, job logs, mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, or similar records; and as applicable, a copy of a business license, a workspace lease, or a workspace rental agreement.

Unpredictable income is calculated by averaging the income from at least three consecutive months and no more than 12 months preceding the initial certification, or the recertification, or when the family reports income in excess of 85% of State Median Income (SMI).

### **Seeking Employment**

*CalWORKs Stage 1 Program:* Participants who are seeking employment on CalWORKs Stage 1 (no longer receiving cash aid) are eligible for child care for up sixty (60) working days per fiscal year, shall occur on no more than five (5) days per week, and for less than thirty (30) hours per week. CalWORKs Stage 1 families on cash aid must contact their Employment Counselor for authorization.

*Alameda County Pilot Program (ACPP):* Participants who are seeking employment on ACPP are eligible for child care for not less than twelve (12) months, shall occur on no more than five (5) days per week, and up to 32.5 hours per week.

### **Participants in a Vocational Training/Education Program**

If the basis of need as stated on the application for services is vocational training leading directly to a recognized trade, paraprofessional, or profession, child care and development services shall be limited to whichever expires first: (1) Six (6) years from the initiation of services pursuant to this section; or (2) Twenty four semester (24) units, or its equivalent, after the attainment of a Bachelor's Degree.

The Training Verification Form must be completed and include the following information:

- I. A statement of the parent's/guardian's vocational goal;
- II. The name of the training institution that is providing the vocational training;
- III. The dates that current quarter, semester, or training period, will begin and end;
- IV. The anticipated completion date of all required training activities to meet the vocational goal
- V. A current class schedule that is either an electronic print-out from the training institution of the parent's/guardian's current class schedule or, if unavailable, a document that includes all of the following:
  - The classes in which the parent/guardian is currently enrolled;
  - The days of the week and times of day of the classes; and
  - The signature or stamp of the training institution's registrar.

On-line or televised instructional classes that are unit bearing classes from an accredited training institution shall be counted as class time at one (1) hour a week for each unit. The parent/guardian shall provide a copy of the syllabus or other class documentation and, as applicable, the web address of the on-line program. The accrediting body of the training institution shall be among those recognized by the United States Department of Education. Students may request for travel time and/or study time if needed. Certain limitations apply.

*CalWORKs Stage 1 Program:* Parents/guardians must recertify or update their certification period prior to the beginning of each term. Parents/guardians are required to maintain at least a 2.0-grade point average (GPA) or pass the program's requirements in at least 50 percent of the classes for the non-graded program. If the grade point average for any term is less than 2.0, the parent/guardian may continue to receive one (1) additional term, to raise the GPA, and to continue to receive subsidized child care. Adequate progress is required to continue to receive subsidized child care for vocational training/education training after the conditional term is completed.

*ACPP:* Parents/guardians participating in a vocational training/education program are eligible to receive services for twenty- four (24) months or end of fiscal year. If during the eligibility period the parent/guardian reaches their six (6) year limit for receiving services for vocational training or their twenty- four (24) unit limit after they have earned their Bachelor's Degree, the parent/guardian may still use services up to their re-certification date. Parents/guardians can voluntarily report changes to update their school schedule, but documentation will be needed (update) before any change takes place.

### **CalWORKs Stage 1 Participants**

CalWORKs Stage 1, non-working participants on cash must request child care services from their Alameda County Department of Social Services Employment Counselor (EC). The EC will send a Child Care Request Form (CCRF) to Child Care Links to authorize, revise, or terminate child care services.

### **Parental Incapacity**

If the basis of need as stated on the application for services is parental incapacity, child care and development services shall not exceed fifty (50) hours per week. A legally qualified health professional must complete the Statement of Parental Incapacity identifying the extent to which the parent/guardian is incapable of providing care and supervision.

*CalWORKs Stage 1 Program:* Parental incapacity can only be claimed for the second parent/guardian in a two-parent/guardian household.

*ACPP:* The period of eligibility for services when the need for services is incapacitation is for not less than twenty-four (24) months or end of fiscal year.

### **Application Process**

- I. Parents/guardians are interviewed by an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy Representative to determine eligibility and services are not approved until parents/guardians have submitted all required documentation, and need and eligibility have been reviewed and certified by Child Care Links staff.
- II. A copy of the Child Care Links Child Care Provider and Participant Handbook will be provided at the initial interview.

### **Recertification/Maintaining Eligibility**

- I. *Working CalWORKs Stage 1 Program:* Families are recertified every 4-6 months depending on their eligibility and need.
- II. *Non-working CalWORKs Stage 1 participants on cash aid:* Participants must have a current, original Child Care Request Form approved by their County Employment Counselor. The form must be sent directly to Child Care Links each time their approved activity is extended to continue subsidized child care. This must be done within thirty (30) days unless otherwise approved by the California Department of Social Services Supervisor.
- III. *ACPP:* Once a family has been certified for services, contract service hours and family fee remain the same throughout the full duration of the family's eligibility period; 24-months, or 12-months for Seeking Employment. No changes can be made without the written request from the parent/guardian.

## **Types of Child Care Providers**

### **State Licensed Child Care Centers**

State Licensed Child Care Centers provide care in large group settings. Children can be grouped by age or developmental level. A variety of experiences or activities may be offered,

due to an increased number of children and staff diversity. Centers can be licensed to serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-age children, or a combination of these age groups.

Licensing standards do not always ensure that center-based care will offer services most suitable for your child(ren) and family. Licensed Child Care Centers are licensed by the State Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, Title 22 Regulations, which ensure the health and safety of children. **510.622.2602**

**[www.cclid.ca.gov](http://www.cclid.ca.gov)**

### **License-Exempt Center-Based Child Care**

A child care center that is exempt from licensure because the center is located on school property, the child care center is administered by the school, and all children attending the child care are also enrolled in the school. In addition, the center must abide by the following:

- I. Use sign-in/sign-out documents to record attendance
- II. Provide adult supervision during all hours of operation
- III. All employees in contact with children have completed a criminal history background examination

### **State Licensed Family Child Care Home**

State Licensed Family Child Care Homes provide child care in homes of Licensed Family Child Care Providers. This type of care may offer a home-like atmosphere and may include children of many ages. Children may take part in a variety of experiences, activities, and family routines. While not required, many Family Child Care Home Providers complete college-level classes in

Early Childhood Education. State Licensed Family Child Care Homes are licensed by the State of California, Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, Title 22 Regulations, which ensure the health and safety of children. **510.622.2602 [www.cclid.ca.gov](http://www.cclid.ca.gov)**

### **License-Exempt Child Care (relative and non-relative)**

License-Exempt child care does not require licensing and is provided by an adult who is eighteen (18) years or older. Exempt Non-Relative Child Care Providers may only care for the child(ren) from one (1) family. Participants who choose non-relative License-Exempt child care must select a Child Care Provider that will be caring for their child(ren) only. There are two (2) types of License-Exempt Relative Child Care:

- I. **Exempt Relative:** Child care provided by an adult eighteen (18) years or older who is the aunt, uncle or grandparent of the child.
- II. **Exempt Non-Relative:** Child care provided by an adult eighteen (18) years or older who is **not** the aunt, uncle or grandparent of the child. Exempt Non-Relative Child Care Providers will need to be fingerprinted and registered with TrustLine.

### **TrustLine**

TrustLine is a registry of Licensed-Exempt Child Care Providers who have “cleared” a background screening (fingerprint and criminal record clearance, California Criminal History System and Child Abuse Central Index – Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Records) to ensure the health and safety of children.

**1.800.822.8490**

**[www.trustline.org](http://www.trustline.org)**

### **Child Care Links will not issue reimbursements to License-Exempt Non-Relative Providers who are not registered as “cleared” on TrustLine.**

- I. **Stage 1:** License Exempt Non-Relative Child Care Providers who serve Stage 1 clients will not receive reimbursement for services unless he/she is TrustLine registered (cleared).

- II. **Stage 2, Stage 3, and CAPP:** License Exempt Non-Relative Child Care Providers must be TrustLine registered (cleared) prior to the authorized start date of care to receive reimbursement for services. Retroactive reimbursements will not be issued. Under special circumstances, the participant may choose a provisional License Exempt Non-Relative Child Care Provider to be reimbursed for a period of up to thirty (30) consecutive calendar days. In these situations, the Child Care Provider must complete the TrustLine application process and submit fingerprints for a background check, prior to the first authorized day of care.
  - A. By the end of the thirty (30) consecutive calendar days, the provisional Child Care Provider must become TrustLine registered (cleared), in order to receive reimbursement for services. If the clearance does not occur within the thirty (30) days, retroactive reimbursements will not be issued. Future child care will only be authorized with a Child Care Provider once he/she is TrustLine registered (cleared). Retroactive reimbursements will not be issued.
  - B. If the provisional Child Care Provider is not TrustLine registered (cleared) by the end of the thirty (30) calendar day period, the participant must enroll an eligible Child Care Provider in order to continue to receive services. An eligible Child Care Provider is defined as one of the following:
    - 1. Licensed or License Exempt Center-Based Child Care
    - 2. Licensed Family Child Care Home
    - 3. Relative License-Exempt Child Care Provider
    - 4. Non-Relative License-Exempt Child Care Provider - TrustLine registered (cleared)
  - C. A participant may enroll a provisional Child Care Provider no more than once in any one hundred-eighty (180) consecutive calendar days.

### **Child Care Provider Eligibility for Participation in Subsidy Programs**

- I. **Child Care Providers are self-employed and are not employees of Child Care Links.**
- II. All Child Care Providers must have a current W-9, a copy of their original California ID, Driver's License, or any other government issued picture identification card and a copy of their signed Social Security Card in its original state or Tax Identification Number (TIN) on file. Child Care Providers will be reimbursed according to the name on their original signed Social Security Card, TIN or IRS letter. Social Security Cards requiring INS authorization will need to provide current proof of authorization.
- III. Child Care Providers are responsible for paying his/her own Social Security and other taxes.
- IV. Child Care Providers who are reimbursed \$600 or more will be issued a 1099 statement indicating the total amount reimbursed for services. This document will be mailed by Child Care Links for the calendar year by January 31<sup>st</sup>, of the following calendar year (date is set by federal law). This information will also be reported to the IRS.
- V. Child Care Providers must offer programs for children based on sound principles of child growth and development.
- VI. Child Care Providers must allow parents/guardians unlimited access to their child(ren) while in care.
- VII. Child Care Providers must sign a Child Care Subsidy Certificate Agreement for each child in care. The Certificate Agreement is not valid unless signed by the participant, Child Care Provider and an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy Representative.
- VIII. Child Care Providers offering sectarian care (care that includes religious worship/instruction) are not eligible to participate in state-funded programs.
- IX. Child Care Providers who move must notify Child Care Links at least one (1) week prior. A Change of Address Form must be completed on-site at a local Child Care Links office. Photo identification is required. **NOTE: When applicable, a copy of the license for the**

**new site must be submitted. Reimbursements for child care will not be issued if the facility does not have an active license.**

- X. Child Care Providers must refrain from discrimination on any basis including race, religion, national origin, color, ethnic group identification, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, or mental or physical disability (ADA), in determining which children are served.
- XI. Child Care Providers must refrain from the use of corporal punishment or any act that may be interpreted as corporal punishment.
- XII. Child Care Providers must refrain from charging families for any services related to child care, during the approved hours of child care and scheduled to be reimbursed by Child Care Links. The only exception is when the Child Care Provider's normal and customary rates exceed the maximum rate allowed by the state, and the parents/guardians are required to "co-pay" the difference in order to meet the provider's actual rate charged to all families.
- XIII. All Child Care Providers must have a working cell phone and/or land line telephone on site where child care is provided. Proof of a working phone may be required.
- XIV. All Child Care Providers will maintain a monthly Attendance Sheet for each child, documenting the dates and actual times child care was provided each day, including the time the child entered and the time the child left child care. This information must be documented on a **daily basis**. The participant or approved substitute, eighteen (18) years or older, is authorized to enter information on the Attendance Sheet when the child arrives at the facility and/or when the child leaves the facility.  
For All Stage 1 Participants:
  - 1. The participant or approved substitute, eighteen (18) years or older, must **sign** the child in and out of care.)
  - 2. For school-age children, the Child Care Provider must **initial** time in and/or out of school.
- XV. The parents/guardians must **sign** the bottom of the Attendance Sheet, under penalty of perjury, indicating all information on the form is true and correct, to the best of their knowledge.
- XVI. All Child Care Providers **must** submit Attendance Sheets within thirty (30) days, after child care is completed, and no later than the last working day of the month following child care.
- XVII. Child Care Providers **may not** be reimbursed when Attendance Sheets are submitted **after the deadline** of thirty (30) calendar days, following provided child care. With the Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer or an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy/CalWORKs representative's approval, Attendance Sheets received after the thirty (30) calendar day time limit may be reimbursed, if funding permits.

### **Licensed Child Care Providers**

License-Exempt Center-Based Child Care Policies are the same as the Licensed Child Care Program Policies. These recreation programs and school district programs meet the requirements contained in California's Title 22, Health and Safety Code, and are therefore treated as licensed.

- I. Licensed Child Care Providers must comply with all licensing requirements as stipulated by Community Care Licensing. Licensed Child Care Providers must submit a copy of their current facility license, facility posted rates, policies/handbook and a signed Child Care Links License Provider Policy Certification Form.
- II. Reimbursements issued to Child Care Providers by Child Care Links shall be equal to the rate charged to private paying families and are not to exceed the applicable Regional Market Rate Ceiling.

- III. Child Care Links shall reimburse Licensed Child Care Providers in accordance with the Child Care Provider's requested rates, which cannot exceed the ceilings established and pursuant to state regulations, and must be equal to rates advertised and posted with local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.
- IV. Licensed Child Care Providers may update their rates one (1) time each fiscal year. Child Care Providers must submit child care rates, charged to all families, to Child Care Links and their local Resource and Referral Agency, along with a statement signed by the Child Care Provider confirming that the rates charged for any subsidized child care are equal to, or less than, the rates charged for non-subsidized child care.
- V. Licensed Child Care Providers must notify Child Care Links of the date of a move to a new house or child care facility in advance (a minimum of a five (5) business day notice is required). A copy of the new facility license **must** also be provided to Child Care Links. Failure to notify Child Care Links or submit required documentation may result in a suspension from all subsidized child care programs until the required documents are received.
  - A. **Child care licenses are not transferable.** You must apply for a new facility license with Community Care Licensing when you move. The license must be active to receive reimbursement.
  - B. Notify Child Care Links immediately if your business changes.
- VI. Child Care Links will not issue reimbursements for days when the child care facility is closed and unavailable for parents/guardians. Exception: Child Care Links provides ten (10) approved days of non-operation as stated in Child Care Subsidy Providers and Participants Handbook).
  - A. Reimbursements will not be made for private school or tuition (K – 12).
  - B. For **all CDE Funded Programs (Not including Stage 1)**: Child Care Links will issue reimbursement for child care that is considered Broadly Consistent (defined as services used by the participant that are based on authorized hours of certified child care with differences in usage lasting two (2) weeks or less). Child Care Links will not issue reimbursements for child care that continues to be Broadly Inconsistent with the certified hours of child care. This includes any change to child care in excess of two (2) weeks **and** one (1) of the following:
    - 1. Affects the parent fee; **or**
    - 2. Affects the reimbursement rate ceiling (part-time to full-time, or fulltime to part-time)
  - C. If no Attendance Record is received for 2 months or it has been received blank, and parent/guardian cannot be reached, an NOA for the abandonment of child care will be issued.
- VII. Child Care Links will issue reimbursements for the following items if they are a part of the registration fee:
  - A. Transportation charges
  - B. Books, educational materials or supplies
  - C. Field trips

A Child Care Provider's registration fee, or portion thereof, may be reimbursed if the Child Care Provider's rate, plus a prorated amount of the fee, is within the Regional Market Rate ceiling. If a Child Care Provider's rate is already at the Regional Market Rate ceiling, the registration fee is **not** reimbursable.

### License-Exempt Child Care Providers

- I. Prior to enrollment, all License-Exempt Child Care Providers will have a search performed on their name in the Megan's Law website database. The website has information on registered sex offenders in California and contains specific names, addresses, aliases and



pictures of offenders. If the search results match the residence of the Child Care Provider and/or the name of the Child Care Provider, and the Child Care Provider's identity is confirmed with a picture ID, enrollment of the Child Care Provider will be immediately denied. [www.meganslaw.ca.gov](http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov)

- II. License-Exempt Child Care Providers must be at least eighteen (18) years old. A valid California Driver's License or California Identification Card is required.
- III. Relative License-Exempt Child Care Providers must complete and have on file a Declaration of Exemption from TrustLine and Health and Safety Certification. The Child Care Provider must complete a Statement of Relationship Form.
- IV. Non-Related License-Exempt Child Care Providers must complete the TrustLine Registration process, which includes a Live Scan fingerprinting clearance and completion of the Health and Safety Certification Form. Reimbursements will not be issued unless the Child Care Provider has been TrustLine registered (cleared).
- V. Provisional License-Exempt Child Care Providers must complete the TrustLine application process and submit fingerprints for a background check, prior to the first authorized start day of child care. Child Care Providers must be TrustLine registered (cleared) within thirty (30) calendar days of the beginning of authorized child care to receive reimbursement for services. Reimbursements will not be issued if the clearance does not occur within thirty (30) calendar days.
- VI. License-Exempt Child Care Providers are reimbursed for the actual hours of child care provided.
- VII. License-Exempt Child Care Providers must provide one (1) source of verification of their residence by submitting at least one (1) document in his/her name mailed to his/her address, in addition to a photo ID, and an original signed Social Security Card before child care can be approved. The proof of residency document must be current and within the last sixty (60) days.

### **In-Home Licensed Exempt Child Care**

In-Home Licensed Exempt Child Care is child care provided in the home in which the child resides. When In-Home Licensed Exempt Child care is used, the participant is considered a Household Employer and must comply with all employment laws regarding minimum wage, payroll, disability, unemployment, taxes, sick leave, and purchase liability insurance. Any participant choosing to use an In-Home License-Exempt Child Care Provider must complete an In-Home License-Exempt Child Care Policy Form stating he/she agrees to carry out all requirements of an employer, as specified under the Federal and State law.

Child Care Links promotes parental choice child care. Within funding guidelines, all categories of Child Care Providers shall be made available to eligible parents/guardians choosing child care.

For CalWORKs Stage 2, Stage 3 and CAPP, the following In-Home Child Care Policy applies: participants must submit documents as required by the payment program, in order to prove compliance with all Federal, State, and Local Government Rules and Regulations regarding Household Employment.

### **Child Care Provider Rates**

- I. Child Care Providers may not charge Child Care Links more than they charge for private paying families for child care services.
- II. Child Care Providers who give private paying families a family discount for multiple children in child care must give Child Care Links the same discount for subsidized child care families with multiple children in child care.
- III. Separate charges to Child Care Links for meals, transportation, or other expenses by a Licensed Child Care Provider must be included in the Child Care Provider's

published child care rates or registration fees, noted on the Child Care Provider's policies, contract, or handbook, and approved by Child Care Links. Participants are responsible for any fees above the state Regional Market Rate ceiling, and beyond what the Child Care Links Subsidy Program allows.

- IV. In cases where the selected Child Care Provider's rates exceed the Regional Market Rate ceilings for the category of child care needed, the participant must pay the difference (co-pay) directly to the Child Care Provider.
- V. Rate adjustments for evening and weekend child care are available to License Child Care Providers only and must meet Title 5 Regulations.
- VI. Rate adjustments for the child care of children with exceptional needs or are severely handicapped must meet the state Title 5 Regulations, and require the Child Care Provider to submit documentation showing additional accommodations are required to properly care for the child(ren), and that those accommodations are a result of an ongoing financial burden for the Child Care Provider.
- VII. Licensed Child Care Providers must submit copies of their usual and customary rates. All services provided, including contracts, policies, vacations, holidays and/or the program handbook used for all subsidized and non-subsidized participants must be submitted, in order to participate in the Child Care Links Subsidy Program. The Child Care Links Licensed Provider Policy Certification Form must be completed and submitted.
- VIII. License-Exempt Child Care Providers must submit a rate sheet at the initial time they agree to participate in the Child Care Links Subsidy Program.
- IX. Each Child Care Links fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>) or alternate specified dates within the current Child Care Links fiscal year, Child Care Providers may submit updated rates. Child Care Links requires a thirty (30) day notice, in order to review and process all rate increases. Once rates have been submitted and approved, Child Care Provider reimbursements will be issued based on current rates on file, and carried forward into each fiscal year, until Child Care Links has been officially notified by the Child Care Provider that rates have been updated.

## Certificate Agreements for Subsidized Child Care

### Establishing Certificate Agreements

- I. The Child Care Links Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreement is established with the participant and the Child Care Provider. The Certificate Agreement specifies the hours and the cost of care. Both the participant and Child Care Provider must sign this form. The form will be valid once signed by an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy/CalWORKs Representative. Reimbursements will not be issued if a valid Certificate Agreement is not on file with Child Care Links.
- II. When changing Child Care Providers, a new Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreement must be signed by the participant and new Child Care Provider, and approved by an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy Representative **before** the change takes place.
- III. Child Care Links will issue reimbursements for authorized child care hours based on the need for services. If there is a change in the number of hours of child care needed (increase or decrease), participants must notify Child Care Links immediately so that the Certificate Agreement can be updated and/or revised. Supporting documentation, such as an Employment Verification Form, Check Stubs, Training Verification Form or other documents may be required.
- IV. Participants are responsible for payments to their Child Care Provider for any care used and not authorized by Child Care Links on the signed Child Care Links Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreement.

- V. Child Care Links will not reimburse for days when the child care facility is closed and unavailable to parents/guardians. Licensed Child Care Providers can be reimbursed up to ten (10) non-operational days as listed on the Child Care Provider's contract, policies, or handbook.
- VI. Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreements are determined by actual hours of needed care, based on the participant's reason for utilizing services. For example: care hours for an employed participant would be based on work schedule/s and commute time/s.
- VII. To accommodate flexible working hours, Child Care Links may issue flexible Child Care Certificate Agreements based on the individual needs of participants.
- VIII. Child Care Links does not reimburse for time to facilitate personal business.
- IX. Child Care Links will not reimburse the following Child Care Providers:
  - A. A Non-Relative License-Exempt Child Care Provider who is not registered as (cleared) through TrustLine
  - B. A provisional Child Care Provider whose TrustLine application has not been approved (cleared) within thirty (30) calendar days of the first day of child care
  - C. A Child Care Provider whose TrustLine case has been closed or denied
  - D. A licensed Child Care Provider whose facility license has been closed, suspended or revoked.
- X. Child Care Links will terminate services with a License-Exempt Child Care Provider immediately upon reliable and documented information of the following:
  - A. Child Care Provider has active or contagious tuberculosis
  - B. Child Care Provider has been convicted of any crime involving violence against, or abuse, or neglect of children
  - C. Child Care Providers TrustLine has been denied or closed

### **Temporary/Provider Agreements (Licensed Care Only)**

- I. Participants and Child Care Providers must give a minimum of seven (7) calendar day's notice before terminating from the Subsidized Child Care Program. Participants must notify both their present Child Care Provider and Child Care Links of their intentions. **Participants must also check with the Child Care Provider to ensure that no more than seven (7) calendar days notice is required.**
- II. Participants who wish to change Child Care Providers, and are not terminating from the Subsidized Child Care Program must give both Child Care Links and their present Child Care Provider a minimum of seven (7) calendar days notice, **unless otherwise stated by the Child Care Provider.** The participant must complete a new Certificate Agreement with Child Care Links and the new Child Care Provider **before** the change takes place.
  - A. If seven (7) calendar days notice are not given, Child Care Links will issue reimbursement to the previous Child Care Provider for this week, in lieu of notice, when requested by the Child Care Provider.
  - B. Child Care Links Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreements with a new Child Care Provider are not effective before the end of the seven (7) calendar day notice to the previous Child Care Provider. A waiver may be granted at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or the Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director.
- III. Child Care Links will give participants and Licensed Child Care Providers a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar day advance notice if Child Care Links terminates the participant's Child Care Subsidy Parent/Provider Certificate Agreement. The date mailed and the date of termination is not counted as part of the fourteen (14) consecutive calendar day notice. In cases of submission of false information, or substantiated fraud, immediate termination may occur.

- IV. The Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer or Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director may waive the fourteen (14) consecutive calendar day notice of termination due to special circumstances and in cases of unavailability of funding.

### **Documentation of Child Care: Attendance Sheets**

- I. Attendance Sheets are furnished by Child Care Links, and are required to document the use of child care. Original Attendance Sheets must be submitted after the month that the last day of child care is completed. **Photocopies, faxes and scans are not allowed, and will not be approved for reimbursement.** If Attendance Sheets are lost or misplaced through no fault of the Child Care Provider, Child Care Links may accept a photo copy, fax or scan with the Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer or Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director's approval.
- II. Participants and/or an approved substitute (18 years or older) are required to document the dates and actual times child care was provided each day, including the time the child entered and the time the child left care. This information must be documented on a **daily basis**. The participant must **sign the bottom of the Attendance Sheet at the end of the month**, under penalty of perjury, indicating all information on the form is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.
- III. **Submitted Attendance Sheets must contain the actual times each child is dropped off and picked up.** The child care hours used must be based on the current Child Care Subsidy Participant/Provider Certificate Agreement, or a revision of the Child Care Subsidy Participant/Provider Certificate that has been approved by Child Care Links.
- IV. Child Care Providers must ensure that participants have easy and **daily access to Attendance Sheets**. Child Care Provider participation in the Subsidized Child Care Program may be terminated if the Child Care Provider interferes with a participant's ability to complete the Attendance Sheet. This includes, but is not limited to, entering the times for the participant, signing the participant's name, or directing the participant to write in times other than what child care actually occurred.
- V. Child Care Providers must notify Child Care Links immediately if a child is absent without notice for more than three (3) consecutive days.
- VI. **Child Care Providers cannot sign a participant's initials or participant's signature on Attendance Sheets.**

### **Child Care Subsidy Reimbursement Process**

**Important:** Child Care Provider reimbursements will be processed within fifteen (15) business days from the date Child Care Links receives Attendance Sheet/s.

- I. Child Care Providers must submit Attendance Sheets to Child Care Links monthly. Attendance Sheets for the current month of child care may not be submitted until after the last day of the month for which child care has taken place.
- II. Reimbursement may be delayed when:
  - A. Attendance Sheets are not correctly completed and signed
  - B. Eligibility for child care has not been approved for the submitted month
  - C. State budget is not approved
- III. Child Care Links will make reasonable efforts to collect overpayments and recover funds due to fraud.

- IV. Child Care Links will **not** issue reimbursements to any Child Care Provider who has had his/her license revoked or who has had his/her TrustLine closed, denied or revoked. If you are a Licensed Family Child Care Home and you move, your new license must be active, in order to receive reimbursements for child care.
- V. Reimbursements to License-Exempt Child Care Providers requiring TrustLine approval must be TrustLine registered (cleared) prior to approval for reimbursement.
- VI. Attendance Sheets must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the month child care has been provided. Attendance sheets submitted more than thirty (30) days following the month of child care was provided, will be considered past due and may not be reimbursed.
- VII. Reimbursement will be issued upon approval of the Chief Executive Officer or Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director and only if funding permits. This may not apply to Stage 1 participants.
- VIII. **Note:** Attendance Sheets for the month of June are due no later than July 15<sup>th</sup> of the same calendar year. Any Attendance Sheets submitted past July 15<sup>th</sup> may not be reimbursable. This does not apply to Stage 1 participants.
- IX. Child Care Providers assume the risk of non-payment, based on unavailable funding for subsidized child care programs.

### **Compliance with Attendance Sheet Guidelines**

Participants (including a participant's authorized representative) must comply with Attendance Sheet policies and procedures. Failure will result in the following actions:

- I. First and Second: Verbal Warning (phone call)
- II. Third: Written Warning
- III. Fourth: Must appear for a mandatory meeting with an authorized Child Care Links Subsidy Representative of Child Care Links to review Attendance Sheet guidelines. A written final warning will be issued at that time.
- IV. Fifth: Termination of Subsidized Child Care Program for non-compliance, based on Attendance Sheet policies and procedures.

### **Absence/Holiday/Days of Non-Operation Policies For Licensed Child Care Only**

#### **Excused Absences: CalWORKs Stage 1 Only**

- I. Excused absences are limited to ten (10) days per month, per child.
- II. Excused absences include: illness of the child or participant, injury, family emergencies, or court-ordered visits. Participants must note the reason/s on Attendance Sheet/s, accompanied by a full signature.
- III. Family emergencies considered excused absences include: sudden illness of a relative, death, funeral, car accident or court appearances.

#### **Best Interest Days (10): CalWORKs Stage 1 Only**

The State of California authorizes ten (10) Best Interest Days for each child authorized to receive child care services. These days can be used any time during the current fiscal year, July 1st to June 30th, for each child on the program. Any Best Interest Days exceeding the ten (10) authorized will be considered unexcused absences and will be the responsibility of the participant to pay the Child Care Provider for these days.

Best Interest Days include: vacations, out of town or staying home with participant or relative, school programs, field trips, special family events, family vacations, transportation problems or other reasons documented on the Attendance Sheet that are in the best interest of a child.

### **Unexcused Absences: CalWORKs Stage 1 Only**

- I. All absences not identified as excused are considered unexcused.
- II. Best Interest Days which exceed ten (10) days are considered unexcused absences.
- III. Reimbursements will not be issued for unexcused absences.

### **Days of Non-Operation (Holidays):**

#### **Licensed Child Care Providers only - All programs**

- I. Child Care Links will issue reimbursement for a maximum of ten (10) days of non operation per year. These may include the following holidays but are not limited to: New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday, President's Day, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, and Christmas Day.
- II. When a child is unable to receive child care services from the Child Care Provider's facility on a paid day of non-operation, Child Care Links will reimburse for the contracted hours for that day when the Child Care Provider requests reimbursement. Child Care Links does **not** reimburse for a day of non-operation if it falls on a weekend unless it is a regular day for which child care is provided.
- III. If a child is present at the Child Care Provider's facility on a holiday or day planned non-operation, reimbursement will be issued to the Child Care Provider for that day, based on the approved hours of care.
- IV. Child Care Links does not reimburse for days of non-operation on drop-in contracts.
- V. Child Care Providers must submit in writing, holidays/days of non-operation in advance to Child Care Links. A maximum of ten (10) calendar days will be approved per fiscal year. In order to be reimbursed, all non-operational days must be listed in the facilities posted rates, policies, contract or handbook.

### **Alternative Hours for School-Age Children**

Hours of child care not requiring contract changes are school holidays, illnesses, or when a child is absent from school and still in the care of the same Child Care Provider. These hours must be recorded by date and reason. Stage 1 participants must include a full participant daily signature for each change on Attendance Sheets.

### **Temporary Suspension of Services**

(Does not apply to CalWORKs Stage 1 participants)

If there is a temporary period where there is no need for subsidized child care services, the family may be granted a temporary suspension of services. Temporary suspension may not exceed twelve (12) consecutive weeks and can be extended another four (4) weeks if the suspension is for medical leave.

### **Family Fees**

Family fees are determined using the California Department of Education Family Fee Schedule and are based on a family's gross monthly income and family size. A family fee is charged per family, not per child, and is based on the child who uses the most amount of care, which is

usually the youngest child in the family. A part-time monthly fee is applied if the child is certified for less than 130 hours of child care, per month. A full-time monthly fee is applied if the child is certified for 130 hours or more of child care, per month.

**(Part-time = less than 130 hours, full-time = 130 hours or more)**

When a family fee is required, the participant is informed as to the amount of family fee costs at the time of their initial application and/or recertification.

- I. Per the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the California Department of Education (CDE), participants who are receiving CalWORKs cash aid will not be charged a family fee.
- II. All participant family fees are paid directly to Child Care Links, via debit card, cash, money orders, cashier's check, personal check or credit cards.
- III. If your Child Care Provider is eligible to be reimbursed for Holidays and excused absences, these hours will be included in the family fee calculation.
- IV. A returned check requires cash payment, money order, debit card or cashier's check as a replacement. Returned checks must be replaced within one (1) business day of notification.
- V. Participants who have more than two (2) returned checks are permanently required to pay their fees by cash payment, money order, debit card or cashier's check.
- VI. Family fees are not a co-pay. Co-pays may occur in cases where the Child Care Provider rate exceeds the Regional Market Rate ceiling for the category of care needed, and the participant contracts to pay any differences. Child Care Links is not responsible for additional payments. The participant must pay any differences to their Child Care Provider.
- VII. Participants may voluntarily report changes
  - a To reduce their family fees (without a decrease in their service hours).
  - b Increase their service hours (without an increase to the family fee)

**Family Fee Billing**

Family fee billing statements are mailed to participants at the beginning of each month for which child care takes place. Payment is due upon receipt of the statement and becomes delinquent on the 15th day of the month.

**Delinquent Fees**

If fees are delinquent, Child Care Links will send a Notice of Action (NOA) indicating a termination date if the fee is not paid in full within nineteen (19) calendar days of the NOA mailing date. A copy of the NOA, with payment amount deleted, will be sent to the Child Care Provider. If fees are not paid by the due date on the NOA, Child Care Links will terminate all child care services on the termination date specified on the NOA. The participant may contact their Child Care Links Eligibility Specialist to see if they are eligible for a payment plan. Only three (3) payment arrangements or (3) Notices of Actions are allowed per fiscal year. The fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) payment arrangement or the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Notice of Action will be a final termination due to the parent's/guardian's failure to consistently abide by Providers and Participants Handbook. Upon termination of services for non-payment of fees, the family is not eligible for future services; until all past, due fees are paid.

## **Fraud Policy**

The California Department of Education requires Child Care Links to take reasonable actions to recover funds due to fraud. Fraud includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information or statements, altering documentation. If a determination is made that fraudulent activity has occurred, one or more of the following actions will take place:

- I. Participant's case will be terminated and he/she may no longer be served by Child Care Links
- II. Child Care Provider will be removed from participation in all Child Care Links programs
- III. The case will be referred to appropriate law enforcement agencies for investigation, and possible prosecution

## **Suspension and Removal of Participants from Child Care Links Programs**

Reasons for removal of participants from a child care subsidy program may include, but are not limited to the following:

- I. Non-payment of fees
- II. Failure to recertify in a timely manner
- III. Failure to submit information and/or documents regarding eligibility or need for services, or any other required documentation by due dates
- IV. No longer eligible, based on income or need for services
- V. Does not have eligible Child Care Provider enrolled
- VI. Submission of fraudulent, false, or misleading information or documentation, and/or involved in any fraudulent activities surrounding child care subsidies, either separately or in collusion with the Child Care Provider/Participant
- VII. Abusive language, any type of harassment, intimidating actions and/or abusive behavior in the presence of Child Care Links staff, parents/guardians, Child Care Providers or children
- VIII. Failure to abide by Attendance Sheet guidelines
- IX. Failure to abide by the Child Care Links Child Care Provider and Participant Handbook

## **Suspension and Removal of Child Care Providers from Child Care Links Programs**

Child Care Links reserves the right to suspend or remove any Child Care Provider from one or all of its programs.

The District Attorney, Community Care Licensing, Child Protective Services or similar government agency may suspend a Child Care Provider facility license during an investigation. Child Care Links reserves the right to withhold any information with regard to the investigation from the Child Care Provider if so requested by the investigative agency.

Child Care Links will notify Child Care Providers in writing when their name is removed from a program. The reason for such action will be stated, and documentation will be kept on file. Child Care Links will also notify any participant receiving subsidy at the facility that the Child Care Provider is no longer eligible to participate in the Child Care Links Subsidized Child Care Program.

Reasons for removal of Child Care Providers include, but not limited to:

- I. Non-conformity with licensing regulations
- II. Three (3) unresolved complaints and/or concerns by participants or the staff at Child Care Links
- III. Unresolved questions with licensing agency
- IV. Failure to furnish Child Care Links with a copy of the current facility license
- V. Refusal to provide access to participants
- VI. Submission of fraudulent, false, or misleading information or documentation, and/or involved in any fraudulent activities surrounding child care subsidies, either separately or in collusion with the Child Care Provider/Participant



- VII. Interference with a participant's ability to complete Attendance Sheets
- VIII. Failure to abide by Attendance Sheet guidelines
- IX. Abusive language and or intimidating actions in the presence of Child Care Links staff, parents/guardians, Child Care Providers or children
- X. TrustLine closure, denial or revocation
- XI. Failure to submit TrustLine application and fingerprint
- XIII. Failure to follow the Child Care Links Child Care Provider and Participant Handbook

### **Participants Reinstatement Policies**

- I. Child Care Links will not provide subsidized child care services to participants who have submitted false information. CalWORKs participants who are participating in an entitlement program, and who submit false information will be referred to the Department of Social Services for further investigation
- II. Participants whose subsidy case has been terminated for failure to follow the Child Care Links Provider and Participants Handbook other than the submission of false information may have their names placed on the Eligibility List. Participants are enrolled in priority order from this list as long as they are income eligible and have a need for services.
- III. Participants, who have been terminated for Good Cause, other than as specified in Suspension and Removal, may be reinstated at the discretion of the Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer and/or Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director.

### **Child Care Providers Reinstatement Policies**

- I. Child Care Providers who have been terminated for submitting false information will not be reinstated.
- II. A Child Care Provider may request reinstatement after having been terminated, due to licensing concerns and/or violations, other than the submission of false information. The Child Care Provider may be reinstated on written confirmation from the Licensing agency, stating that the concerns and/or violations have been resolved.
- III. Child Care Providers who have been terminated for Good Cause, other than as specified in Suspension and Removal, may be reinstated at the discretion of the Child Care Links Chief Executive Officer or the Subsidy/CalWORKs Program Director.

### **Client Grievance Policy**

If you have a complaint about the performance of Child Care Links staff, and/or you feel you have been treated unfairly, the following are the steps you should take to have your complaint heard:

- I. Talk privately to the person with whom you have the problem. We encourage you to try first to work out the problem in an open and informal way.
- II. If you do not feel comfortable talking with the person with whom you have the problem, or you do talk with them and are not satisfied with the outcome, you may make an appointment to speak with or submit a written complaint (which may be in your own language) to Chief Executive Officer or designee. If you have good cause to use another medium to communicate your complaint, such as a tape recording, you may do so. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall meet with you or provide you with a written response to your written complaint within ten (10) working days of the meeting or receipt of your written complaint.

All grievances shall be put in writing to the Chief Executive Officer or designee by mail or in person at the following office:

Chief Executive Officer  
6601 Owen Drive Suite 100  
Pleasanton, CA 94588

(CDSS grievances only) if you prefer, you may bypass the above steps and immediately contact the funding agency below:

**Alameda County Social Services Agency  
Contracts Office  
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 103  
Oakland, CA 94607  
Email: [ContractsCustomer@acgov.org](mailto:ContractsCustomer@acgov.org)**

### **Participant Appeal Information**

If a participant does not agree with an action/decision from Child Care Links, the participant may appeal. To protect appeal rights, there are specific instructions located on the second page of the Notice of Action. Follow these steps to request a local hearing. If you disagree with the decision of the local hearing, you can appeal to the California Department of Education Child Development Division, or the California Department of Social Services, depending on program funding. If the participant does not respond by the required due dates or fails to submit the required appeal information with all appeal requests, appeals may be considered abandoned. It is the policy of Child Care Links to allow a parent/guardian to postpone an appeal hearing once.

### **Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice (CDE only)**

Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding Child Care Links alleged violation. This includes allegations of unlawful discrimination. Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with:

**California Department of Education  
Early Learning and Care Division  
Complaint Coordinator  
1430 N Street, Suite 3410  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court.