

April 24, 2009



Mr. Robert B. Allers, Commissioner
Dutchess County Department Social Services
60 Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-3299

New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services

www.ocfs.state.ny.us

Dear Commissioner Allers:

This letter is to inform you that the child care section found in the administrative component of your Annual Plan Update 2008-2009 was approved on April 22, 2009. The child care section became effective on April 22, 2009.

David A. Paterson
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

This approval is being issued separate from the approval of other sections of your plan in order to accommodate your county's need to implement the child care services provisions. A letter approving the remaining sections of your plan will be sent upon their approval.

If you have any questions about this approval or the child care section found in your Annual Plan Update 2008-2009 please contact Ms. Amy Ryan, (518) 474-9620 or by e-mail at Amy.Ryan@ocfs.state.ny.us.

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Sincerely,

Janice M. Molnar
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services

Cc: Bridget Goddard



APPENDICES G-1-12 Child Care Section

The Child Care section of the county plan has been designed to reflect the increased flexibility allowed in the delivery of child care services under a block grant model. This component of the county plan is structured to reflect both federal and State requirements while allowing districts the opportunity to address locally defined needs and priorities.

Planning activities continue to support a partnership between the State and the county for meeting shared goals and outcomes. Child Care services covered in the county plan include the New York State Child Care Block Grant (NYSCCBG) and Title XX. The LDSS has the option of including additional information as may be determined locally to clarify or strengthen the plan. LDSS is responsible for developing the Child Care Section of the county plan that will allow them to meet the needs of the community and to maximize the use of available funds.

The Child Care section of the county plan has been created as a form, which will allow districts to complete the child care section as an electronic document.

Format:

This portion of the county plan is divided into the following four required Appendices and eight optional Appendices.

APU Instructions: All districts will need to submit Appendix G-1. Appendix G-2 does not need to be submitted for the APU unless a district proposes changes to the G-2 found in the approved 07-09 Child and Family Services Plan. County-specific replacement pages for the G-3 will be provided to each district by DCCS. The replacement pages for the G-3 will reflect the removal of the option to impose a higher number of work hours for eligibility for Child Care In Lieu of TA. Districts will not need to submit the G-3 as part of the APU unless the district proposes other changes to the G-3. If a district does propose a change to the G-3 it should be submitted on the replacement G-3 which will be provided to each district prior to the due date for the APU. Appendix H, Annual Plan Update Checklist, is a required appendix. When Appendix H is submitted and the child care component of the district's plan is approved, DCCS will use Appendix H to update each district's G-4, District Options. Any changes to the G-4 will be reflected in the approved plan.

Required Appendices for the Child and Family Services Multi-Year Plan:

- I. Administration – Appendix G-1
- II. Other Eligible Families if Funds are Available – Appendix G-2
- III. Reasonable Distance, Very Low Income, Family Share, Case Closings and Case Openings and Fraud and Abuse Control Activities – Appendix G-3
- IV. Districts Options – Appendix G-4

Optional Appendices:

1. Priority Populations-Additional Local Priorities – Appendix G-5
2. Funding Set-Asides – Appendix G-6
3. Title XX Child Care– Appendix G-7

4. Additional Local Standards for Child Care Providers – Appendix G-8
5. Payment to Child Care Providers for Absences – Appendix G-9
6. Payment to Child Care Providers for Program Closures – Appendix G-10
7. Transportation, Differential Payment Rates, and Sleep – Appendix G-11
8. Child Care Exceeding 24 Hours, Child Care Service Unit, Waivers, Break in Activities – Appendix G- 12

**APPENDIX G-1 Child Care Section
DATED 2007-2009**

County: Dutchess

I. Administration (Required Section)

Describe how your district is organized to administer the child care program including any functions that are subcontracted to an outside agency.

1. Identify the unit that has primary responsibility for the administration of child care for:

Public Assistance Families: Dutchess County Department of Social Services Day Care Unit

Transitioning Families: Dutchess County Department of Social Services Day Care Unit

Income Eligible Families: Dutchess County Department of Social Services Day Care Unit

Title XX: Dutchess County Department of Social Services Day Care Unit

1. Indicate the use of New York State Child Care Block Grant (NYSCCBG) Funds.

FFY 06-07 Rollover Funds (<i>this amount is available from the NYSCCBG</i>) of	\$ 1,110,129
FFY 07-08 Rollover Funds	\$ 0
Estimate of Flexible Funds for Families (FFFS) for child care subsidies	\$ 0
NYSCCBG Allocation for SFY 08-09	\$4,653,621
Estimate of Local Share	\$500,000

Total Estimated NYSCCBG Amount: \$5,153,621

A. Subsidy	\$4,615,065
B. Other program costs (excluding subsidy)	\$0
C. Administrative costs	\$ 538,556

3. Does your district have a contract or formal agreement with another organization to perform any of the following functions?

<u>Function:</u>	<u>Organization:</u>	<u>Amount of Contract:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility screening		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistance in locating care	Child Care Council of Dutchess	\$17,873
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Care Information Systems	Child Care Council of Dutchess	*
<input type="checkbox"/> Determining if legally exempt providers meet State approved additional local standards (if applicable)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other registration, training, fingerprinting	Child Care Council of Dutchess	*

*combined \$251,799

APPENDIX G-2 Other Eligible Families

II. Other Eligible Families if Funds are Available (Required Section)

Listed below are optional categories of eligible families that your district can include as part of its ICP/CSP. Select any categories your district wants to serve and describe any limitations associated with the category.

Optional Categories	Option	Limitations
1. Public Assistance (PA) families participating in an approved activity in addition to their required work activity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. PA families or families with income up to 200% of the State Income Standard (SIS) when the caretaker is: a) participating in an approved substance abuse treatment program b) homeless c) a victim of domestic violence d) in an emergency situation of short duration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	a) Public Assistance recipients only b) c) Public Assistance recipients only when attending the Latina worker's evening DV support group sessions d)
3. Families with an open child protective services case when child care is needed to protect the child.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Families with income up to 200% of the State Income Standard (SIS) when child care services are needed because the child's caretaker: a) is physically or mentally incapacitated b) has family duties away from home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	a) Two parent households in which one parent is employed and the other parent is incapacitated and unable to provide care b)

<p>5. Families with income up to 200% of the SIS when child care services are needed for the child's caretaker to actively seek employment for a period up to 6 months.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>6. PA families where a sanctioned parent is participating in unsubsidized employment, earning wages at a level equal to or greater than the minimum amount under law.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>If working towards lifting the sanction</p>
<p>7. Families with income up to 200% of the SIS when child care services are needed for the child's caretaker to participate in:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>a) a public or private educational facility providing a standard high school curriculum offered by or approved by the local school district</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>b) an education program that prepares an individual to obtain a NYS High School equivalency diploma</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>c) a program providing basic remedial education in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and oral communications for individuals functioning below the ninth month of the eighth grade level</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>d) a program providing literacy training designed to help individuals improve their ability to read and write;</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>e) English as a second language (ESL) instructional program designed to develop skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing the English language for individuals whose primary language is other than English</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>f) a two year full-time degree granting program at a community college, a two year college, or an undergraduate college with a specific vocational goal leading to an associate degree or certificate of completion</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

<p>g) a training program, which has a specific occupational goal and is conducted by an institution licensed or approved by the State Education Department other than a college or university</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>If approved by the Employment Worker and the program does not exceed six (6) months</p>
<p>h) a prevocational skill training program such as, a basic education and literacy training program</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>If approved by the Employment Worker and the program does not exceed 6 months</p>
<p>i) a demonstration project designed for vocational training or other project approved by the Department of Labor.</p> <p>The parent/caretaker must complete the selected programs listed under number seven within 30 consecutive calendar months. The parent/caretaker cannot enroll in more than one program.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>8. PA recipients and low income families with incomes up to 200% of the State Income Standard who are satisfactorily participating in a two-year program other than one with a specific vocational sequence (leading to an associates degree or certificate of completion and that is reasonably expected to lead to an improvement in the parent/caretaker's earning capacity) as long as the parent(s) or caretaker is also working at least 17 ½ hours per week. The parent/caretaker must demonstrate his or her ability to successfully complete the course of study.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>9. PA recipients and low income families with incomes up to 200% of the State Income Standard who are satisfactorily participating in a four-year college or university program (leading to a bachelor degree and that is reasonably expected to lead to an improvement in the parent/caretaker's earning capacity) as long as the parent(s) or caretaker is also working at least 17 ½ hours per week. The parent/caretaker must demonstrate his or her ability to successfully complete the course of study.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

APPENDIX G-3 Definitions

III. Reasonable Distance, Very Low Income, Family Share, Case Closings and Openings, and Fraud and Abuse Control Activities (Required Section)

Reasonable Distance

Your district is required to define reasonable distance based on community standards for determining accessible child care.

The following defines "reasonable distance":

For the purpose of determining whether child care is accessible to a TANF recipient who is a caretaker relative of a child under the age of 13 Dutchess County defines a reasonable distance as one-way travel time up to one and one half hours from home to a work activity with a stop at a child care provider.

Describe any steps/consultations made to arrive at your definition:

The Department determined that a distance of two miles from a bus route was appropriate.

Family Share

Family share is the weekly amount paid towards the costs of the child care services by the child's parent or caretaker. In establishing family share, your district must select a percentage from 10 percent to 35 percent to use in calculating the family share. The family share of child care is calculated by applying the family share percentage against the amount of the family's gross income that is in excess of the State Income Standard divided by 52.

Family Share Percentage selected by our district 30%.

Case Closings (select one)

Our district has established local priorities beyond the federally-mandated priorities. If all NYSCCBG funds are committed, our district will discontinue funding to those families that have lower priorities in order to serve families with higher priorities. Described below is how our district will select cases to be closed in the event that there are insufficient or no funds available.

Our district has not established priorities beyond the federally-mandated priorities. If all NYSCCBG funds are committed, case closings for families which are not eligible under a child care guarantee and are not a federally-mandated priority must be based on the length of time in receipt of services. The length of time used to close cases may be based either on the shortest or longest time receiving child care services but must be consistent for all families. Our district has chosen to close cases based on

- shortest time receiving child care services
 longest time receiving child care services

Case Openings

Described below is how our district will select cases to be opened in the event that there are insufficient funds available.

In the event that there are limited funds available the County will continue to accept applications for day care. If no funds are available, the County will deny each application.

As funds become available, the County will open case in the following order:

1. Families in receipt of public assistance when the sanctioned parent is participating in unsubsidized employment earning wages at a level equal to or greater than the minimum wage if working toward lifting a sanction.
2. Employed individuals with income at or below 200% of the SIS when one parent is employed and the other is incapacitated and unable to provide care.
3. Employed individuals with a child with special needs and income at or below 100% of the SIS
4. Employed individuals with income at or below 100% of the SIS,
5. Employed individuals with a child with special needs and income at or below 175% of the SIS
6. Employed individuals with income at or below 175% of the SIS.
7. Families with income up to 200% of SIS when caretaker is participating in an approved substance abuse program.
8. Families with income up to 200% of SIS when caretaker is participating in an approved educational or vocational activity approved by the DC WIS.
9. Families in receipt of public assistance when the caretaker is a victim of - domestic violence and attending the Latina worker's domestic violence support group

All families with an open Child Protective Services case in need of care to protect a child will be opened whether or not we have child care block grant funds.

Fraud and Abuse Control Activities

The district must identify below the criteria it will use to determine which child care subsidy applications suggest a higher than acceptable risk for fraudulent or erroneous child care subsidy payment and procedures for referring such applications to the district's front end detection system.

Please see the attached Front End Detection System Plan for Operations for NYSCCBG Child Care Cases and Investigative Unit Operations Plan for Dutchess County.

2. Childcare Unit Process and Procedure:

The FEDs referral will be reviewed for each Childcare eligibility interview. When one or more of the circumstances listed above occurs, the referral form and the appointment notice are completed by the Childcare worker. The referral is given to the Childcare supervisor with the case record. The supervisor reviews the referral and, if appropriate, sends the FEDS referral to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) within 24 hours of the date of application.

The district must describe below its sampling methodology used to determine which cases it will seek verification of an applicant or recipient's continued need for child care including, as applicable, verification of participation in employment, education or other required activities.

For all Low income and Transitional Child Care cases, a recertification application is completed yearly (copy attached). An Employment Questionnaire (copy attached) is also completed yearly. This results in contact every six months. Verification of income is required at each contact. A new enrollment form is only required at recertification.

For Child care for TA individuals in training, participating in WEP, attending approved drug/alcohol treatment, or employed, a new enrollment form is required yearly. All informal providers must submit forms to the Child Care supervisor who reviews them and forwards them to the Child Care Council for approval. Payment is made only if provider is approved and verification of attendance/participation is received. Payment is made for actual hours of participation plus reasonable travel time.

The district must describe below its sampling methodology used to determine which child care providers of subsidized child care services they will review for the purpose of comparing the child care providers attendance forms for children receiving subsidized child care services and any child and adult care food program inspection forms to verify that child care was actually provided on the days listed on the attendance forms.

Dutchess currently has approximately 47 providers who are not day care centers in the CACFP Program. We subcontract with the Child Care Council of Dutchess to do food program inspections and to verify that child care is actually being provided. The Council forwards the attendance forms from each inspection to the Department where annually 40 of the 47 providers are selected for a point in time review. The Supervisor of the Day Care Unit contacts the Child Care Council member who is in charge of the site visits on a monthly basis and requests a list of 3-4 providers that had site visits done that month along with the names of the children present at the time of the visit. He will then compare the information to the attendance forms for that provider to verify that DSS was billed correctly. Any discrepancies will be referred to the Special Investigations Unit for further action.

APPENDIX G-4 District Options

IV. District Options (Required Section)

Districts have certain flexibility to administer the child care subsidy program to meet local needs. Check which options that your district wishes to include in your ICP/CSP. Complete attachments for any area(s) checked.

1. Our district has identified local priorities in addition to the federal priorities (complete Appendix G-5).
2. Our district has chosen to establish funding set-asides for NYSCCBG (complete Appendix G-6).
3. Our district is using Title XX funds for the provision of child care services (complete Appendix G-7).
4. Our district has chosen to establish additional local standards for child care providers (complete Appendix G-8).
5. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers for absences (complete Appendix G-9).
6. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers for program closures (complete Appendix G-10).
7. Our district has chosen to pay for transportation to and from a child care provider (complete Appendix G-11).
8. Our district has chosen to pay up to a 15% higher than the applicable market rates for regulated child care services that have been accredited by a nationally recognized child care organization (complete Appendix G-11).
9. Our district has chosen to pay up to 15% higher than the applicable market rates for non-traditional hours (complete Appendix G-11).
10. Our district has chosen to pay for child care services while a caretaker who works the second or third shift sleeps (complete Appendix G-11).
11. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers who provide child care services, which exceed 24 consecutive hours (complete Appendix G-12).
12. Our district has chosen to include 18, 19 or 20 year olds in the Child Care Services Unit (complete Appendix G-12).

APPENDIX G-4 (continued)

13. Our district is seeking a waiver from one or more regulatory provisions. Such waivers are limited to those regulatory standards that are not specifically included in law (complete Appendix G-12).
14. Our district has chosen to pay for breaks in activity for low income families (non public assistance families, complete Appendix G-12).
15. Our district has chosen to use local equivalent forms such as, but not limited to, child care application, client notification and/or legally exempt enrollment forms (attach copies of the local equivalent forms your district uses).

Any previous approvals for local equivalent forms will not be carried forward into this ICP/CSP. Therefore, any local equivalent forms a district wishes to establish or renew must be included in this plan and will be subject to review and approval by OCFS.

APU Instructions: Only those local equivalent forms that were not previously approved in the 2007-09 CFSP need to be included.

PAYMENT TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS FOR ABSENCES

The following providers are eligible for payment for absences:
 (Check any that are eligible)

- Day Care Center School Age Child Care
- Group Family Day Care Family Day Care
- Legally Exempt Group

Our district will only pay for absences to providers with which the district has a contract or letter of intent. Yes No

Base period selected (check one) 3 months 6 months

Number of absences allowed during base period:

Period	Routine Limits (# of days)	Extenuating Circumstances (# of days)	Total Number of Absences Allowed (# of days)
In a month	12	3	15
Base period	12	8	20

List reasons for absences for which the district will allow payment:

Illness of the adult or child or a temporary crisis

List any limitations on the above providers' eligibility for payment for absences:

Payment will only be made when the provider charges all customers the same rates with absences

Note: Legally exempt family child care and in-home child care providers are **not** eligible to receive payment for absences.