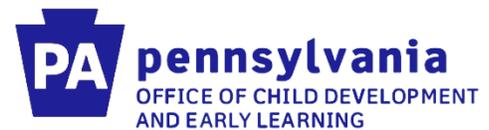


Pennsylvania's Draft State Plan Child Care Development Block Grant Summary of Key Changes



The Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is one of the primary federal funding sources for monitoring regulated child care programs, child care subsidy through Child Care Works, and child care quality improvement through Keystone STARS. The CCDBG was reauthorized in November 2014 for the first time in nearly 20 years. Pennsylvania's plan, once finalized, will address how the state will implement new requirements imposed by the reauthorization over the next three federal fiscal years (2016-2018).

Listed below are key changes in Pennsylvania's draft plan. Access the full draft plan at www.dhs.pa.gov.

Key Changes for Pennsylvania's Draft Plan

- **General**
 - Changes period of time covered by the plan from two to three years. This plan will cover the period June 1, 2016 (extended from October 1, 2015) through September 30, 2018.
 - Clearly establishes the block grant as a *child development support* in addition to a support for working families.
- **Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education (Section 2)**
 - Through the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge Grant, consumer outreach and education about early intervention services and the CONNECT helpline will be expanded via a new web presence. This new portal will also provide families with links to resource information on health, employment, and other types of assistance, in three clicks or less.
 - Expanded functionality of the state's COMPASS website for families to locate information on early learning programs, including child care inspection results, and a mobile application for smartphones.
 - OCDEL will be issuing an announcement on the "Reduction of Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Programs in Pennsylvania" to provide guidance to programs regarding appropriate behavior support practices and the reduction of expulsion and suspension in early childhood programs in Pennsylvania.
- **Establish Family-Friendly Eligibility Policies and Provide Stable Child Care (Section 3)**
 - Pennsylvania is already in compliance with the new provision to have a graduated phase-out of assistance when a family exceeds the income eligibility at redetermination but is still below 85% of the state median income.
 - Twelve-month eligibility periods with minimized requirements for reporting changes between eligibility determinations.
 - Continuation of child care for 90 days after parent's loss of work to support job search.

Provide your input on the draft plan.

Individuals and organizations may:

- Submit public comments until January 8, 2016; and
- Attend or testify at public hearings on December 17, 2015 and January 5, 2016.

Visit www.dhs.pa.gov and click on "Child Care and Early Learning" for details.

- Prioritization of vulnerable populations including children from families experiencing homelessness, children in foster placement, siblings of children already enrolled in care, children with special needs, and children participating in pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs who need wrap-around child care.
- **Ensure Equal Access for Children Served by CCDBG (Section 4)**
 - Exploration of the use of contracted slots as a way to provide child care assistance.
 - Exploration of the use of a “cost of quality” tool to better gauge the true cost of providing quality child care.
 - Establish payment rates that are sufficient to ensure equal access.
- **Improve Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements for Child Care Providers (Section 5)**
 - Pre-service and annual unannounced inspections for all child care providers, including family child care homes and friend/neighbor caregivers receiving subsidy.
 - Pre-service training and professional development in 10 core areas including pediatric first aid, CPR and prevention of SIDS.
 - Criminal background checks (already supported by Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law) and coordination with other states.
 - Emergency preparedness and statewide disaster plan.
 - Lowering the certification inspector staff to facility ratio to one inspector per 75 programs.
- **Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce (Section 6)**
 - Heightened professional development requirements, including six pre-service training hours on health and safety topics defined in CCDBG.
 - Enhancements that will result in a comprehensive workforce registry that contains all workforce data in one central location and can easily communicate information to regional and state administrators, partners, and providers.
- **Support Continuous Quality Improvement (Section 7)**
 - Keystone STARS standards realignment.
 - Tiered reimbursement for providers participating in Keystone STARS.
 - More robust infant/toddler set-aside.

To view the plan:

- Go to www.dhs.pa.gov
- Select “Citizens” then “Child Care and Early Learning”
Scroll down to access “CCDBG State Plan”

Comments due by January 8, 2016

Use the template for comments provided at the website

Send comments to RA-PWPACCCDBGPlan@pa.gov or mail to:

Office of Child Development and Early Learning

333 Market Street / Sixth Floor

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126