

Operations Communique #06-06 Unification of the Child Care Subsidy Program

Title: Unification of the Child Care Subsidy Program

Date: July 14, 2006

Priority: High

Action(s) Required: Yes. See "Discussion" and "Next Steps".

Response Required: No

Purpose

The purposes of this communiqué are to:

- § Provide the background for Unification.
- § Confirm the implementation schedule.
- § Initiate and reinforce collaborations between the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies and the County Assistance Office (CAO).

Background

The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) provides help with child care costs to eligible families who need care in order to go to work, school and/or to participate in employment and training programs.

Currently, families who are eligible for child care under the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance (GA), and Food Stamps (FS) programs are served by the CAO. Families who are eligible for child care under the Low Income and Former TANF programs are served by the CCIS. Unification of the child care subsidy program is the Department of Public Welfare's initiative to provide help with child care costs at the CCIS for all families who qualify, regardless of the eligibility program.

Discussion

Unification of the child care subsidy program meets the Administration's goals for a single, fully coordinated early care and education system. The "Unification" presentation attached to this email provides further information on this initiative. It also lays the groundwork for the Office of Child Development's policy for resource and referral services that emphasize the importance of child care choice on a child's early education, development, and school readiness. It is being made available to the CAO and the CCIS to inform and educate staff.

Unification will be phased in beginning November 2006 and concluding June 2007. Counties will be scheduled for the policy and system training necessary to support Unification prior to the implementation date.

Because Unification of the Child Care Subsidy Program is based on a partnership model that places responsibility for meeting the child care

needs of TANF, GA, and Food Stamp families on both the CAO and the CCIS, it is critical that productive working relationships and effective communication practices be initiated and reinforced by the local CCIS and CAO as soon as possible. The “Unification Implementation Schedule” attached to this email confirms the implementation date for each county and identifies the name and contact information for CCIS Directors and CAO Executive Directors to facilitate mutual outreach.

Next Steps

1. Share this information with appropriate staff.
2. Contact the local CAO to schedule a joint meeting to begin outreach.
3. Direct questions to the Subsidy Coordinator.

OBSOLETE