

Continuity of Care Procedure

Head Start

Purpose

This document describes how to support families in the full day/childcare/full year programs, when there is a lapse in their child care funding source.

Guidance

All families enrolled in any full day/child care/full year program must have the ability to pay for childcare at the time of enrollment. This ability to pay can include state child care subsidy, grant funding, self-pay or any combination. Once enrolled, the source of funding should cover the childcare costs except the co-pay, when applicable. Continuity of Care (COC) Funds are used when there is a temporary lapse in the funding source. These funds must be applied for and approved by PSESD, before being made available to the parent/childcare center.

Procedure

1. Family Support (FS) staff becomes aware of loss of childcare funding via the parent.
2. FS staff works with parent to determine if funding loss is temporary COC is only to be used when childcare costs will be reinstated by a specific date.
3. FS staff works with parent and center to determine alternative methods to cover childcare costs while funding is temporarily interrupted. Alternate sources of childcare costs may include DSHS “gap funding”, other family members supporting the cost, the center accepting part time attendance, other agencies supporting the costs (county funding, etc.), employer assistance, etc.
4. If no other sources of temporary funding are available, FS staff contacts ESD Family Support Coordinator and completes the *COC Request for Funds Form* If the child is reinstated within the expected time period, give a copy of the COC approval to Center Director. The ESD EL fiscal department will send the COC Authorization to Pay invoice to the Center Director for billing processing. Centers are responsible for sending in their claims. The claim must match the attendance records sent to PSESD.

-OR-

5. If not approved, help the parent make alternative plans for child’s continued participation in our Early Learning part day programs. Contact the local part day PSESD EL program; if there is no immediate part day opening, request the part day site to over enroll. If this is not possible, have the part day site put child at the top of the waitlist and you may re-request COC funds for the child while the child is waitlisted for the part day site. This request will only be funded through the last day of Head Start services and can’t exceed a total of 45 days.
6. If the parent had a subsidy and DSHS reinstates the subsidy at any time during the period covered by COC request, immediately contact PSESD to stop the processing of COC request.

Addendum

If the loss of funding is permanent, the child is referred for part day services, where available. If the parent is not interested in part day, this is considered voluntary withdrawal from the program and the child is discontinued on the attendance roster. If there is no opening, the child is put on a waitlist for part day services. Part-day centers are encouraged to over enroll to accommodate this child. COC funds may be used to support this child for up to 45 days or until the part-day program ends. If there is no part day program available in the community, the child is withdrawn and staff works with the parent to find alternate sources of learning programs in the community (co-ops using scholarships, library programs, community play and learn programs, etc.)

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC)

WCCC has policies currently in place to help prevent most interruptions in care. Families who enroll their children in full year child care programs will be authorized for up to 12 months while enrolled in the program. If a family becomes ineligible for WCCC subsidy during this period, the Department of Social and Health Services, (DSHS) is required to give advance and adequate written notice of termination or reduction in services. This is a mandatory part of DSHS's basic service delivery. Recipients must receive at least a 10 day notice. Parents are not required to remove children from care the same day they notify DSHS of changes in their circumstances. The rules governing advance and adequate notice are WAC 388-290-0115 and WAC 388-290-0120.

When a parent experiences a gap in approved activity, they are eligible for 28 consecutive days of continued care according to WAC 388-290-0055. It is most often used to assist current WCCC recipients who lose their jobs and need time to look for new employment. It can also be used to maintain child care if we know the previous approved activity is expected to resume within that 28 day window (example: temporary lay off). Families may request the 28 day gap provision twice a year and it may be consecutive.

In addition to the "gap" child care funding, recipients may receive up to 14 consecutive days of care when they are waiting to enter an approved activity. This care is most often authorized to TANF Work First participant who may frequently move from one activity to another.

Family Support staff members can help parents request DSHS funds.

Related Documents

See ERSEA section

Resources

For more information, see Working Connection Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual.

www.del.wa.gov/publications/subsidy/docs/WCCC_PolicyManual.pdf