

Northern Mariana Islands Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Plan with Conditional Approval Letter for FY 2016-2018

Date: Monday, June 27, 2016

The Office of Child Care (OCC) is pleased to release the PDF (Portable Document Format) copy of the approved FY 2016-2018 Northern Mariana Islands CCDF Plan that became effective June 1, 2016 and the conditional approval letter. The Plan serves as the application for CCDF funds by providing a description of, and assurance about, the grantee's child care program and all services available to eligible families. OCC asked States and Territories to write their Plans based on a reasonable interpretation of the Act, pending completion of a final regulation. States and Territories had the option to outline an implementation plan for one or all of the 26 new areas if the State/Territory was not yet able to certify compliance. Thus, these Plans are conditionally approved until each State/Territory fully implements all new requirements of the CCDBG Act of 2014. The OCC will partner with States and Territories to support and monitor the successful and timely implementation of all provisions of the Act. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to amend their program at any time. All amendments must be submitted to OCC for approval within 60 days of the effective of the change.

Please find the following two documents within this PDF:

2016-2018 Northern Mariana Islands CCDF Plan Conditional Approval Letter – OCC issued a letter with the conditions of approval for each State and Territory. In reviewing plans and waiver/extension requests, OCC gave careful consideration to the statutory conditions outlined in the Act, as well as the length of time requested, with the goal of having all provisions related to the Act fully implemented by October 1, 2018 corresponding to the start of the FY2019-2021 CCDF Plan period. The approval letter covers the CCDF Plan for the period of June 1, 2016, through September 30, 2018. A “conditionally approved” plan is a fully approved plan with conditions to be met based on waiver requests, if applicable, and implementation and corrective action plans for unmet requirements. The conditions will be deemed fully met once all provisions in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 are fully implemented.

2016-2018 Northern Mariana Islands CCDF Plan - The Plan describes the CCDF program to be administered by Northern Mariana Islands for the period 6/1/2016 – 9/30/2018 as conditionally approved by OCC. The Plan serves as the application for CCDF funds by providing a description of, and assurance about, the grantee's child care program and all services available to eligible families. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including amending the options selected or described. For purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions of applicable laws printed therein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

NOTE: *The CCDF Plan reflects the services and activities as reported by the Northern Mariana Islands Lead Agency in their CCDF Plans for Fiscal Years 2016-2018. The CCDF Plans offer a snapshot into current and planned efforts, initiatives and implementation plans for each State/Territory through September 30, 2018. These Plans are not a catalog of all activities undertaken by the State/Territory. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is not responsible for the contents of these CCDF plans.*



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

330 C Street, S.W., Washington DC 20201 | www.acf.hhs.gov

June 13, 2016

Robert H. Hunter, Acting Secretary
Department of Community and Cultural Affairs
Caller Box 10007
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Acting Secretary Hunter:

The Office of Child Care (OCC) recognizes that there are many new requirements included in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 that you are working to implement during this Plan period. We appreciate the time and energy that you put into developing your Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan to reform and effectively administer your program. I am pleased to inform you that the Northern Mariana Islands CCDF Plan for the period of June 1, 2016, through September 30, 2018, has been conditionally approved. A "conditionally approved" plan is a fully approved plan with conditions to be met based on your waiver requests, if applicable, and implementation plans for unmet requirements. The conditions will be deemed fully met once all provisions in the CCDBG Act of 2014 are fully implemented and implementation plan action steps are completed. At that time the Northern Mariana Islands CCDF Plan will be approved without conditions. OCC gave careful consideration to the statutory conditions outlined in the Act, as well as the length of time requested, with the goal of having all provisions related to the Act fully implemented by October 1, 2018 corresponding to the start of the FY2019-2021 CCDF Plan period.

Key principles of the CCDF are to provide equal access to child care for children receiving child care assistance and to ensure parental choice. Provider payment rates set too low undermine these principles. As you are aware, the CCDBG Act of 2014 requires states and territories to take the cost of quality into account when setting rates, and to set rates based on the results of the most recent market rate survey or alternative methodology. We continue to be concerned that your rates may not allow for equal access. OCC plans to make review of payment rates a priority for our upcoming

implementation monitoring visits. Thus, the conditional approval of your Plan **does not** constitute a final determination that your payment rates are sufficient to provide access to child care services for eligible families that are comparable to those provided to families that do not receive subsidies, as required by law.

You will receive a Notice of Grant Award in October 2016 from the Office of Administration in the Administration for Children and Families. The notice will include the amount of your award and any additional terms and conditions for the receipt of CCDF program funds. During the effective period of this plan, any substantial changes to the Northern Mariana Islands program must be submitted as a plan amendment to your Regional Office for approval in accordance with 45 CFR 98.18(b).

We remind you that your CCDF-funded child care program for in-home providers must comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations, including Federal wage and income tax laws governing domestic workers. Questions regarding Federal wage laws should be directed to your local or district office of the Wage and Hour Division within the U.S. Department of Labor. Likewise, questions regarding Federal income tax laws should be directed to your local or district office of the Internal Revenue Service.

We look forward to working together toward implementation of the CCDBG Act of 2014 and promoting the early learning and development of children along with family economic stability and success. If you have any questions, please contact Gwendolyn Jones, Acting Child Care Program Manager, Office of Child Care at (214)767-3849 or gwendolyn.jones@acf.hhs.gov. Thank you for all you do each day for children and families.

Sincerely,
Rachel Schumacher
Director
Office of Child Care

cc: Maribel S. D. Loste, Program Administrator
Gwendolyn Jones, Acting Regional Program Manager, Office of Child Care
Region IX

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan For Northern Mariana Islands FFY 2016-2018

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems

Implementation of the requirements of the CCDBG Act of 2014 will require leadership and coordination between the child care assistance program and other child- and family-serving agencies, services, and supports at the state and local levels. ACF recognizes that each grantee must identify the most appropriate entities and individuals to lead and participate in implementation based on the context within that State or Territory. This will include those that manage various components of CCDF-funded activities and requirements (fiscal, subsidy, health and safety monitoring, and continuous quality improvement) as well as other public and private partners.

This section collects information to help ACF understand the stakeholders convened and consulted to develop the Plan, where authority lies to make policy decisions and program changes, and who is responsible for implementing the blueprint for action the Plan describes. For example, the law requires that, at the option of the Tribes, State/Territory Lead Agencies must collaborate and coordinate with Indian tribes or tribal organizations in the State in a timely manner in the development of the CCDF Plan. ACF expects that new requirements in the law will necessitate that grantees build partnerships with other agencies and organizations to better link the children and families receiving financial assistance to information, services and resources regarding other programs for which they may be eligible, including developmental screenings for children, and other resources (also in section 2). In addition, States and Territories must describe how public-private partnerships are being used to increase the supply and quality of child care services.

1.1 CCDF Leadership

The Governor of a State or Territory shall designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint inter-agency office, to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E(c)(1))

1.1.1 Which Lead Agency is designated to administer the CCDF program?

Identify the Lead Agency or joint inter-agency office designated by the State/Territory. ACF will send official grant correspondence such as grant awards, grant adjustments, Plan approvals, and disallowance notifications to the designated contact identified here. (658D(a))

Name of Lead Agency: [Department of Community and Cultural Affairs](#)

Address of Lead Agency: [Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950](#)

Name and Title of the Lead Agency Official: [Robert H. Hunter Acting Secretary](#)

Phone Number: [670-664-2587](#)

E-Mail Address: roberthhunter@gmail.com

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.dcca.gov.mp

1.1.2 Who is the CCDF administrator?

Identify the CCDF administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, with responsibility for administering the State/Territory's CCDF program. ACF will send programmatic communications such as program announcements, program instructions, and data collection instructions to the designated contact identified here. If there is more than one designated contact with equal or shared responsibility for administering the CCDF program, please identify the co-administrator or entity with administrative responsibilities and include contact information.

a) Contact Information for CCDF Administrator:

Name of CCDF Administrator: [Maribel S. D. Loste](#)

Title of CCDF Administrator: [Program Administrator](#)

Address of CCDF Administrator: [Building No. 1347 Ascension Ct. Capitol Hill
Saipan MP 96950](#)

Phone Number: [670-664-2576](tel:670-664-2576)

E-Mail Address: ccdf.maribelloste@gmail.com

b) Contact Information for CCDF Co-Administrator (if applicable):

Name of CCDF Co-Administrator: [Roselia C. Teregeyo](#)

Title of CCDF Co-Administrator: [Support Staff](#)

Phone Number: [670-664-2590](tel:670-664-2590)

E-Mail Address: ccdf.roselleteregeyo@gmail.com

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator:

[the co-administrator is responsible for the overall financial matters of the program. She also serves as the immediate alternate of the administrator in all other activities related to the administration of the program.](#)

c) Primary Contact Information for the CCDF Program:

Phone Number for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any): [670-664-2576](tel:670-664-2576)

Web Address for CCDF program (for the public) (if any): cnmiccdf.org

Web Address for CCDF program policy manual (if any): cnmiccdf.org

Web Address for CCDF program administrative rules (if any): cnmiccdf.org

1.1.3 Identify the agency/department/entity that is responsible for each of the major parts of CCDF administration and the name of the lead contact responsible for managing this portion of the Plan.

Outreach and Consumer Education (section 2)

Agency/Department/Entity [Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Child Care Licensing Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Ana Santos](#)

Subsidy/Financial Assistance (section 3 and section 4)

Agency/Department/Entity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Roselia Teregeyo](#)

Licensing/Monitoring (section 5)

Agency/Department/Entity [Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Child Care Licensing Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Ana Santos](#)

Child Care Workforce (section 6)

Agency/Department/Entity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Maribel S. D. Loste](#)

Quality Improvement (section 7)

Agency/Department/Entity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Maribel S. D. Loste](#)

Grantee Accountability/Program Integrity (section 8)

Agency/Department/Entity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Maribel S. D. Loste and Roselia Teregeyo](#)

[1.2 CCDF Policy Decision Authority](#)

The Lead Agency has broad authority to administer (i.e., establish rules) and operate (i.e., implement activities) the CCDF program through other governmental, non-governmental, or other public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program. (658D(b))

[1.2.1 Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are set or established at](#)

the State/Territory versus the local level?

In other words, identify whether CCDF program rules and policies are established by the state or territory (even if administered or operated locally) or whether the CCDF policies or rules are established by local entities (such as counties or workforce boards) setting those policies. Check one.

All program rules and policies are set or established at the State/Territory level.

Some or all program rules and policies are set or established by local entities. If checked, indicate which entities establish the following policies. Check all that apply.

Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:

State/Territory

County.

If checked, describe the type of eligibility policies the county can set

Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity (e.g. workforce board) and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set

Other.

Describe:

Sliding fee scale is set by the:

State/Territory

County

If checked, describe the type of sliding fee scale policies the county can set

Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity (e.g. workforce board) and describe the type of sliding fee scale policies the local entity(ies) can set

Other.

Describe:

Payment rates are set by the:

State/Territory

County.

If checked, describe the type of payment rate policies the county can set

Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity (e.g. workforce board) and describe the type of payment rate policies the local entity(ies) can set

Other.

Describe:

Other.

List and describe (e.g., quality improvement systems, payment practices):

1.2.2 How is the CCDF program operated in your State/Territory?

In other words, which agency(ies) implement or perform these CCDF services and activities and how will the State/Territory ensure that Federal CCDF requirements are fully implemented by other governmental or nongovernmental agencies. ACF recommends minimizing differences in eligibility or other policies across counties or other jurisdictions to ease family burden and confusion. Check all that apply. and describe the services performed by the entity and how the State/Territory ensures accountability that federal requirements are fully implemented by other agency(ies).

a) Who determines eligibility?

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Describe.

Other State/Territory agency.

Describe.

Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments

Describe.

Child care resource and referral agencies

Describe.

Community-based organizations

Describe.

Other.

Describe.

b) Who assists parents in locating child care (consumer education)?

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Describe.

Other State/Territory agency.

Describe.

[The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs \(DCCA\) Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\) also assist parents and the community in locating child care.](#)

Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments

Describe.

Child care resource and referral agencies

Describe.

Community-based organizations

Describe.

Other.

Describe.

c) Who issues payments?

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Describe.

Other State/Territory agency.

Describe.

The CNMI Department of Finance/Treasury issues payments to providers. The CCDF Program Office accepts all documents related to payments to providers and prepares the overall request for payment to the Dept. of Finance/Treasury.

Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments

Describe.

Child care resource and referral agencies

Describe.

Community-based organizations

Describe.

Other.

Describe.

1.3 Consultation in the Development of the State Plan

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing the CCDF plan which serves as the application for a three-year implementation period. In the development of the CCDF plan, the Lead Agency shall consult with appropriate representatives of units of general purpose local government. (658D(b)(2)) General purpose local governments is defined by the U.S. Census at

https://www.census.gov/newsroom/cspan/govts/20120301_cspan_govts_def_3.pdf The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States consult with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act). 658E(c)(2)(R) In addition, States shall, at the option of an Indian tribe or tribal organization in the State, collaborate and coordinate with such Indian tribe or tribal organization in the development of the State plan in a timely manner. (658D (b)(1)(E))

1.3.1 Check who and describe how the Lead Agency consulted with these entities in the development of the CCDF Plan (check all that apply).

For example, did the entity participate in a drafting committee, review drafts, sign off on the final version, or develop a memorandum of understanding with the Lead Agency to meet requirements to share information or services for CCDF subsidy families, or other manner of participation? This list includes entities required by law along with a list of optional CCDF Plan consultation partners that Lead Agencies potentially would consult with in their developing their CCDF Plan.

[REQUIRED] Appropriate representatives of general purpose local government, which can include counties, municipalities or townships/towns

Describe:

The DCCA CCDF Program continues to take active roles in partnerships and collaborations with other local government entities serving the same population. These include: programs and services under the Public School System, such as the Head Start Program, through the Head Start Community Partnerships, as a member in the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), Early Intervention Services, and Public Health's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS). The Head Start (HS) Community Partnerships bring together other service agencies that provide support for the implementation of HS Program's numerous Family Services. This partnership between service agencies provide an avenue for strong communication, cooperation, sharing of information and resources. The goal of this partnership is to improve the delivery of community family centered services that pays particular attention to the complex and diverse needs of the families and children of the CNMI. The CNMI CCDF Program continues to be an active member fo the Interagency Coordinating Council or ICC. The ICC assists PSS Early Intervention Services (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) in achieving the full participation, cooperation, coordination of all appropriate public agencies in the CNMI. The ICC also advices and assists the PSS Early Intervention Services in the development, implementation, and maintenance of the

policies that constitute a statewide system of service. The Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) or Big Steps for Little Feet aims to strengthen, improve, and expand numerous agencies' services to enable children and families to benefit much from a more systematic, intergrated and comprehensive delivery system. ECCS comprises of the following membership: Home Visiting Program, WIC, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD), Children's Developmental Assisstance Center, Immunization Program, Community Guidance Center, and Maternal and Child Health Program and the DCCA CCDF Program. These program meet at a minimum quarterly to discuss and share information related to their respective services and provide updates. Recommendations that emerge as a result of these meeting are noted and incorporated, if applicable, to the formulation of the DCCA CCDF Program State Plan or revision of the plan. If needed, DCCA CCDF Program will engage in MOA's and/or MOU's to indicate support of such partnership and activities. To note, DCCA CCDF Program recently signed an MOA with ECCS.

[REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act).

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a State Advisory Council on ECE and Care.

If checked, does the Lead Agency have official representation and a decision-making role in the State Advisory Council?

Yes,

No.

If no State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act) exists in your State/Territory, describe how you consulted with any other state- or state-designated cross-agency body such as an advisory council, cross-agency commission, or council or cabinet related to child and family planning and policy

The CNMI is an active member of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) which is a cross-agency membership. The plan was shared with the membership for their comments, input, and recommendations.

[REQUIRED] Indian tribe(s) and/or tribal organization(s), at the option of individual Tribes.

Describe, including which Tribe(s) you consulted with

The CNMI does not have Indian tribes.

Check N/A if no Indian Tribes and/or Tribal organizations in the State

State/Territory agency responsible for public education.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

State agency/agencies responsible for programs for children with special needs, including early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool).

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

State/Territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

State/Territory agency responsible for child care licensing.

Describe:

[The Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) and the DCCA Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\) has an ongoing collaboration meetings and activities. CCLP actively participated in the completion of the CNMI CCDF State Plan.](#)

State/Territory office/director for Head Start State collaboration

Describe:

[The CNMI does not have a Territory Office/Director for Head Start State Collaboration.](#)

State/Territory/local agencies with Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships grants.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

State/Territory agency responsible for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Describe:

State/Territory agency responsible for WIC, nutrition (including breast-feeding support), and childhood obesity prevention

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

Other Federal, State, local and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth serving developmental services.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Child Home Visitation programs grant

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- Agency responsible for Medicaid/Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT).

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- McKinney-Vento State coordinators for Homeless Education.

Describe:

- State/Territory agency responsible for public health.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- State/Territory agency responsible for mental health.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- State/Territory liaison for military child care programs.

Describe:

- State/Territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development.

Describe:

[The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.](#)

- State/Territory agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Describe:

[The CNMI does not receive TANF.](#)

State/community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families.

Describe:

Child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a child care resource and referral agency.

Provider groups or associations.

Describe:

The State Plan was shared for review, comments, input, and recommendations.

Worker organizations.

Describe:

Parent groups or organizations.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

1.3.2. Describe the Statewide/Territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan (658D(b)(1)(C)).

Lead Agencies are required to hold at least one public hearing in the State/Territory with sufficient State/Territory-wide distribution of notice prior to such hearing to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF Plan. At a minimum, the description should include:

a) Date(s) of notice of public hearing: 01/11/2016

Reminder - Must be at least 20 calendar days prior to the date of the public hearing.

b) How was the public notified about the public hearing, including how notice was accessible for people with disabilities? Please include website links if utilized to provide notice.

Notification was provided through all types of media, emailed to all stakeholders, posted on

the Governor's Website, CCDF website, posted on the DCCA Main Office Lobby, posted on the DCCA website, Posted on the CCDF Office Lobby, posted on the CCDF website, Posted in community bulletin boards. Attached to parent payment invoices. Announcement was made through the local radio station. Postings were printed in bold and large print to accommodate people with disabilities.

c) Date(s) of public hearing(s): 02/08/2016

Reminder - Must be no earlier than September 1, 2015 which is 9 months prior to the June 1, 2016 effective date of the Plan.

d) Hearing site(s) or method(s), including how geographic regions of the State/Territory were addressed Rota: Feb. 8, 2016, Tinian: Feb. 9, 2016, and Saipan: Feb. 11, 2016

e) Describe how the content of the Plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s) Hard copies were made available at the DCCA Secretary's Office, the CCDF Office, the public library, and electronic copies were provided to all partners. It was also made available in the Governor's Website, the DCCA Website and the CCDF Website

f) How will the information provided by the public be taken into consideration in the provision of child care services under this Plan? During the hearing process notes and recordings were taken. Written comments were accepted throughout the comment period. Once the comment period is completed, the program will compile all comments for possible inclusion to the state plan.

1.3.3 Describe the strategies used by the Lead Agency to make the CCDF Plan and Plan Amendments available to the public. Check all that apply and describe the strategies below, including any relevant links as examples.

Working with advisory committees.

Describe:

Working with child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

Providing translation in other languages.

Describe:

Making available on the Lead Agency website.

List the website:

The State Plan and plan amendments were posted on the Governor's Website (gov.mp), the Department's Website (dccagov.mp) and the child care and development fund website, (cnmiccdf.org).

Sharing through social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, email, etc.).

Describe:

Providing notification to stakeholders (e.g., provider groups, parent groups).

Describe:

Shared during announcements in partner meetings of the availability of copies of the draft state plan and shared during CCDF Program events for the community. Announced through the radio.

Other.

Describe:

Provided also through outreach activities.

1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the Plan describe how the State/Territory will efficiently, and to the extent practicable, coordinate child care services supported by CCDF with programs operating at the Federal, State/Territory, and local levels for children in the programs listed below.

1.4.1 Check who and describe how your State/Territory coordinates or plans to efficiently coordinate child care services with the following programs to expand accessibility and continuity of care, and assist children enrolled in early childhood programs to receive full-day services that meet the needs of working families. (658E(c)(2)(O))

Please describe the goals of this coordination, such as extending the day or year of services for families; smoothing transitions for children between programs or as they age into school, enhancing and aligning quality of services, linking comprehensive services to children in child care settings or developing supply of quality care for vulnerable populations. NOTE that this list

appears similar to the list provided in 1.3.1 which focused on consultation for purposes of developing the CCDF Plan, however, this list includes entities required by law, along with a list of optional CCDF Plan coordination partners that Lead Agencies potentially would coordinate with over the next 3 years to expand accessibility and continuity of care, and assist children enrolled in early childhood programs to receive full-day services. Check and describe all that apply.

- [REQUIRED] Programs operating at the Federal, State and local levels for children in pre-school programs (e.g., state-or locally-funded pre-k, Head Start, school-based programs, public and private preschools, programs serving preschool children receiving special education services, etc.).

Describe:

The DCCA CCDF Program will continue to sit as member of the following agencies partnership and/or collaboration activities that serve families with young children: Head Start Community Partnerships, Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), and the Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS). DCCA CCDF Program will enter into MOA's and MOU's if and when needed to ensure that programs are supporting the needs of families with young children. CCDF Program will also continue to engage in discussions pertaining to quality child care and how to further address the unique and diverse needs of families with young children. The purpose of these partnerships and collaboration is to ensure that comprehensive services are being provided to families and children, increasing quality of child care services, smooth transition of children between programs, providing updates to partners, identifying and leveraging resources to address needs of families and children.

- [REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] Tribal early childhood programs.

Describe, including which Tribes coordinating with:

The CNMI does not have any Tribal early childhood programs.

- Check N/A if no Indian Tribes and/or Tribal organizations or programs in the State.

- [REQUIRED] Other Federal, State, local early childhood programs serving infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to sit as a member of the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) as well as engage in discussions pertaining to quality care for infants and toddler, especially those with special needs.

- [REQUIRED] Early childhood programs serving homeless children (as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act).

Describe:

The CNMI will continue to work with early childhood program serving homeless children.

[REQUIRED] Early childhood programs serving children in foster care.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to work with the DCCA Division of Youth Services or DYS program and if needed enter into an MOU/MOA to ensure that delivery of services is seamless and uninterrupted.

State/Territory agency responsible for child care licensing.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to engage in monthly collaboration meetings with the DCCA Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) to address any and all health and safety issues, trainings and technical assistance needs of child care providers, and outreach activities to the community. CCDF Program will continue to engage in discussions with DCCA CCLP Program regarding quality early care and education and how to support families.

State/Territory agency with Head Start State collaboration grant.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a Head Start State Collaboration grant.

State Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a State Advisory Council

State/Territory/local agencies with Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships grants.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to work with the Early Headstart-Child Care Partnership Grantee to ensure that seamless delivery of service is provided to families with very young children.

McKinney-Vento State coordinators for Homeless Education or local educational agency McKinney-Vento liaisons

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a state coordinator for Homeless Education.

Child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have child care resource and referral agencies.

State/Territory agency responsible for public education.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to sit as a member in councils or committees and work in partnership with the agency responsible for public education.

State/Territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges.

Describe:

DCCA CCDF Program will work closely with the Northern Marianas College (NMC) to ensure that training, technical assistance, and professional development needs of child care providers are addressed. If and when needed, quarterly meetings will be set up to provide updates and address concerns related to the early childhood field.

State/Territory agency responsible for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Describe:

The CNMI does not have CACFP.

State/Territory agency responsible for WIC, nutrition (including breast-feeding support), and childhood obesity prevention.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to work with the WIC Program as well as other programs regarding nutrition and childhood obesity prevention. CCDF Program will continue to see the assistance of the WIC program if and when needed for training and technical assistance to child care providers.

Other Federal, State, local and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth serving developmental services.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to work in collaboration with these groups to ensure that quality of care is provided as well as school readiness is achieved. If and when needed, CCDF program will engage in MOU/MOA's to strengthen these collaboration and partnerships.

State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Childhood Home Visitation programs grant.

Describe:

The CCDF Program has a standing MOA with Maternal and HOME Visiting Program. CCDF and Maternal/HOME Visiting Program will update this MOA when and if needed to ensure that delivery of services to families will be uninterrupted and support to improve quality of care is available to child care providers. CCDF Program will continue to partner and

collaborate with MCH/HOME/ECCS to support the training and technical assistance needs of child care providers.

Agency responsible for Medicaid/Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT).

Describe:

The Commonwealth Health Center Corporation (CHCC) administers the Medicaid Program. CCDF will continue to work in partnership with CHCC to ensure that delivery of services to families will be uninterrupted. If needed, CCDF will engage in MOA's or MOU's.

State/Territory agency responsible for public health.

Describe:

The CCDF Program continues to coordinate with the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation (CHCC/Public Health) in the coordination of services that targets the overall well being of children. Training and Technical Assistance to child care providers are also areas that the CCDF program has partnered with Public Health. Currently, CCDF has established a yearly training for providers that addresses such topics as SIDS, Medication Administration, Poison Prevention, Immunization, Shaken Baby Syndrome etc.

State/Territory agency responsible for mental health.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to collaborate with the Community Guidance Center (under CHCC) in addressing the mental health needs of young children.

State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to collaborate with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs - Division of Youth Services in addressing the welfare needs of young children.

State/Territory liaison for military child care programs.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a liaison for military child care programs.

State/Territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will collaborate with the CNMI Department of Labor under Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in addressing the continuous supply of care providers.

State/Territory agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Describe:

The CNMI does not have TANF.

State/Territory community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families

Describe:

The CNMI does not have community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families.

Provider groups or associations.

Describe:

CCDF will work with and engage in discussion with provider groups and associations.

Worker organizations.

Describe:

The CNMI does not have worker organizations.

Parent groups or organizations.

Describe:

CCDF will work with and engage in discussions with parent groups or organizations.

Other.

Describe:

The CCDF Program will continue to work with community based non-profit organizations in offering Summer Program Grants to be made available to the community.

1.5 Optional Use of Combined Funds

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that States and Territories have the option to combine funding for CCDF child care services with funding for any of the required programs listed in 1.4.1. These include programs operating at the Federal, State and local levels for children in preschool programs, tribal early childhood programs, and other early childhood programs, including those serving infants and toddlers with disabilities, homeless children, and children in foster care. (658E(c)(2)(O))(ii) Combining funds could include blending multiple funding streams, pooling funds, or layering funds together from multiple funding streams in an effort to expand and/or enhance services for children and families to allow for delivery of comprehensive high quality care that meets the needs of children and families. For example, State/Territory agencies may use multiple funding sources to offer grants or contracts to programs to deliver services; a State/Territory may allow county/local government to use coordinated funding streams; or policies may be in place that allow local programs to layer CCDF funds with additional funding sources to pay for full-day, full-year child care that meets Early Head Start/Head Start or State/Territory pre-kindergarten requirements in addition to State/Territory child care licensing requirements. As a reminder, per the OMB Compliance Supplement governing audits

(https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2014), CCDF funds may be used in collaborative efforts with Head Start (CFDA 93.600) programs to provide comprehensive child care and development services for children who are eligible for both programs. In fact, the coordination and collaboration between Head Start and the CCDF is mandated by sections 640(g)(2)(D) and (E), and 642(c) of the Head Start Act (42 USC 9835(g)(2)(D) and (E); 42 USC 9837(c)) in the provision of full working day, full calendar year comprehensive services (42 USC 9835(a)(5)(v)). In order to implement such collaborative programs, which share, for example, space, equipment or materials, grantees may blend several funding streams so that seamless services are provided.

1.5.1 Will you combine CCDF funds with the funds for any program with which you coordinate (described in 1.4.1)?

Yes, If yes, describe at a minimum:

How do you define "combine"

Which funds will you combine

Goal(s) of combining funds (why?) and expected outcomes, such as extending the day or year of services available (i.e., full-day, full-year programming for working families), smoothing transitions for children, enhancing and aligning quality of services, linking comprehensive services to children in child care or developing the supply of child care for vulnerable populations

Method of fund allocation (how you will be combining multiple sets of funding, such as at the State/Territory level, local level, program level?)

How are the funds tracked and method of oversight

No.

1.6 Public-Private Partnerships

The CCDBG Act of 2014 adds a new provision that requires States and Territories to describe in the Plan how the State/Territory encourages partnerships among State/Territory and public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith based organizations and/or community-

based organizations to leverage existing service delivery systems for child care and development services and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children through age 12, such as by implementing voluntary shared services alliance models (i.e., cooperative agreement among providers to pool resources to pay for shared fixed costs and operation). (658E(c)(2)(P)) ACF expects these types of partnerships to leverage public and private resources to further the goals of reauthorization.

1.6.1 Describe the entities with whom and the levels at which the State/Territory is partnering (level - State/Territory, county/local, and/or programs), the goals of the partnerships, method of partnering. Include in your description examples of activities that have resulted from partnerships with other State/Territory and public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith based organizations or community-based organizations, and how the partnerships are expected to leverage existing service delivery systems for child care and development services and to increase the supply and quality of child care services.

The CCDF Program continues to partner with the local agencies and programs serving families with young children. In particular, different members of Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) has been an active supporter of trainings and technical assistance for child care providers. In its 6th year, ECCS has supported this annual training by providing the venue, training materials, and facilitators. Other members of the ECCS has also participated by facilitating specific topics-such as nutrition, immunization, medication administration, etc. Another activity that ECCS has supported the CCDF Program is the implementation of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. ECCS has provided the materials as well as training and technical support to all child care providers. As a result of these partnership, the CCDF Program has maximized its funding to support the other needs of the child care providers, such as providing support for additional educational materials and continue offer trainings and technical assistance free of charge. Another result of this partnership is CCDF is able to open trainings to more participants.

The CCDF Program also continues to partner with other programs and private entities in its outreach efforts. One big event that the CCDF Program continues to take a lead in is the Week of the Young Child/Early Childhood Month. This is a month long celebration that focuses on children, families, the people that care for them and on quality early care experiences. The members include the day care association, Public Health programs, such as the ECCS, MCH, NCDB, Motherread/Fatheread, Humanities Program, PSS Head Start, CCLP Program, and the Joeten Kiyu Public Library. This partnership's major goal is to inform the community regarding services available to them.

The CCDF program also partners with public non-profit organizations to offer Summer Program activities to children ages 6 to 12 years old. This 6-week program offers a variety of activities

that school age children may participate in during the summer months. Through this partnership over 500 school age children access many appropriate activities that focus on healthy lifestyle.

1.7 Coordination with Local or Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Systems

States may use funds to support or establish Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) systems (also see section 7.4). If they do, there are specific requirements for CCR&Rs (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii)) These include:

- Provide families with information on a full range of child care options (including faith-based, community-based child care centers and family child care homes, nontraditional hours and emergency child care centers) in their local area or region
- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive child care assistance to offer the families support and assistance in making an informed decision about child care options in an effort to ensure families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting to suit their needs and that is of high quality as determined by the State/Territory
- Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services provided through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for children with disabilities
- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in local areas or regions of the State/Territory and submit such information to the State/Territory
- Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care centers and family child care homes providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the State/Territory
- As appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the Lead Agency and/or local agencies that administer CCDF.

Nothing in statute prohibits States from using CCR&R agencies to conduct or provide additional services beyond those required by statute above.

1.7.1 Does the State fund a system of local or regional CCR&R organizations?

Yes. The State/Territory funds a CCR&R system. See also related follow-up questions in Section 7.1 and 7.4.

If yes, the local or regional referral agency is required to do all of the activities listed here.

See also related follow-up questions in Section 7.1 and 7.4. Does the CCR&R system

provide all services identified below:

- No. The State/Territory does not fund a CCR&R system and has no plans to establish. Use section 7.4 to describe plans, if any, to establish a CCR&R system.

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States must include a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan for coordination of activities with the State/Territory human services agency, emergency management agency, child care licensing agency, State/Territory local resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council (SAC) or other state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC. (658E(c)(2)(U)) The Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan must include:

- Guidelines for continuing CCDF assistance and child care services after a disaster, which may include provision of temporary child care, and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster.
- Requirements that child care providers receiving CCDF have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.
- Requirements that child care providers receiving CCDF have in place procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.

1.8.1 Describe the status of State's Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan.

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016. If applicable, describe additional ways the State/Territory addresses the needs of children receiving CCDF before, during and after a disaster or emergency, not already incorporated into the Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan. If available, please provide a link to the disaster plan

If applicable, describe additional ways the State/Territory addresses the needs of children receiving CCDF before, during and after a disaster or emergency, not already incorporated into the Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan. If available, please provide a link to the disaster plan

- Not implemented. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and

descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses here will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Other](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[A draft copy of the emergency preparedness is available. The draft includes continuing CCDF assistance to families and child care services after a disaster. If and when needed, the plan describes provision of temporary child care and standards for child care after a disaster. The draft plan describes that all CCDF providers will have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families. CCDF providers will also have continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities as well as children with chronic medical conditions. CCDF providers will have in place procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [Guidelines for continuing CCDF assistance and child care services after a disaster \(which may include provision of temporary child care, and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster\)](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[A final draft is currently being reviewed by our system state specialist. The following activities will take place in order to meet the requirement.](#)

- [1. Monthly calls with the RO and TA Specialist on additional areas for inclusion in the emergency preparedness plan \(if needed\).](#)
- [2. Monthly collaboration meetings with the Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\) and other partners to address requirements](#)

3. Rule Change to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Rules and Regulations. Specifically:

- a. End of May, Draft Amendments of CCDF Rules and Regulations for review by the Attorney General's Office
- b. End of June Final Draft and translations of the Amendments
- c. End of July Public Comments
- d. End of August Final Ruling
- e. End of September training and meeting with providers on the new requirements on Emergency Preparedness

Projected start date for each activity: 10/01/15

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity CNMI Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program nbsp;

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

1. Child Care Licensing Program

2. Child Care Providers

2 Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education

Parents are their children's most important teacher and advocate. State and Territory child care systems interact with parents in multiple ways, therefore presenting many opportunities to engage and inform families. Child care providers can serve as convenient and trusted sources of information for parents and family members on child development and community supports and services. State/Territory and local child care assistance systems should be designed to promote seamless linkages to useful information and other child- and family-services, such as during subsidy intake and redetermination processes and when parents utilize child care resource and referral or QRIS agencies. Outreach and consumer education is an ongoing process and is expected to cover the entire age span covered by CCDF from birth through age 12. The CCDBG Act of 2014 includes key purposes that address the role of parents as child

care consumers who need information to make informed choices regarding the services that best suit their needs. A new purpose of CCDBG is to "promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings." States and Territories have the opportunity to consider how information can be provided to parents through the child care assistance system, partner agencies, and child care sites that will support their role as their children's teacher and advocate. Key new provisions include:

1. 1. The plan must certify that States and Territories will collect and disseminate consumer and provider education information to CCDF parents, providers, and the general public, including information about:
 - a) the availability of child care assistance,
 - b) the quality of child care providers (if available),
 - c) Other programs (specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start and Early Head Start, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)) for which families may also qualify.
 - d) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs and services,
 - e) Research and best practices in child development, and
 - f) State/Territory policies regarding social- emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on the expulsion of preschool-aged children (children from birth to five for purposes of this requirement) from early childhood programs receiving CCDF.
- 2. Information related to the health and safety of children in child care settings. The plan must certify that the State/Territory will make public certain information about the results of health and safety monitoring (described in section 5) using a website that is consumer-friendly and in an easily accessible format, including:
 - a) Provider-specific information: 1) results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints; 2) last date of inspection; and 3) information on corrective actions taken (if applicable).
 - b) Information about: 1) the annual number of deaths; 2) the annual number of serious injuries; and 3) annual number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings.
 - c) State/Territory processes for: 1) licensing child care providers; 2) conducting background checks and the offenses that would keep a provider from being allowed to care for children; and 3) conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers.

[2.1 Information about Child Care Financial Assistance Program Availability and Application Process](#)

Lead Agencies must inform parents of eligible children and the general public of the process by

which they can apply for and potentially receive child care services. (658D(b)(1)(A)), 658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(1))

2.1.1 Describe how the State/Territory informs families of availability of services.

a) How does the State/Territory identify populations and areas of potentially eligible families (e.g., using available federal, State/Territory and local needs assessments to identify potentially eligible families?)

The CCDF program participates in active outreach activities by the Department (DCCA) . These outreach activities assist in identifying potentially eligible families. For example: during NAP (Food Stamp) distribution, CCDF representative is available to provide information to families receiving NAP regarding the CCDF Program. CCDF Program will also ensure information about the program is made readily available at the different DCCA program offices and at the Secretary's Office.

CCDF Program continues to participate and partner with other agencies serving families with young children in outreach efforts. These outreach efforts provide information on identifying populations and areas of potentially eligible families. At a minimum, CCDF will participate quarterly in partners' outreach efforts. CCDF will also provide informational brochures to partner agencies' offices and locations.

Due to funding limitations, CCDF Program in the CNMI is not open throughout the year. New families are able to apply when CCDF has determined it has funds to support new families. When funds are available, CCDF Office generally sends out notice throughout the CNMI of the opening of the program. These announcements are made through the radio, newspaper ads, flyers, and e-mail notifications to partners who then forwards the information to people in their email listing.

b) What partners help with outreach? For example, child care resource and referral agencies, home visitors, pediatricians, faith-based services, State/Territory or local agencies and organizations or other familiar and safe access points serving vulnerable or low-income populations.

Information is shared with all agencies which CCDF Program partners with. One outreach event that the CCDF program takes the lead in and participated by many different agencies, not only those serving families with young children is the Annual Early Childhood Month and

Week of the Young Child. As part of the outreach, a proclamation is made for the month of April as Early Childhood Month and Week of the Young Child. Throughout the month of April, many different activities are provided focusing on early childhood, families with young children, and the people and agencies that support them. Some of the agencies that participate in this event include but is not limited to the following: such as the Early Childhood Comprehensive System, HOME Visiting Program, WIC, Child Care Licensing Program, Motherhead/Fatheread Program, Head Start Program, The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Public Health, Division of Youth Services, Maternal Child Health, day care providers, and many others.

c) What outreach strategies does the Lead Agency use (e.g., media campaigns, State/Territory website, or other electronic outreach)?

DCCA CCDF conducts newspaper and radio announcements, participation in onsite/face to face outreach activities (high school grounds, college orientation, discussion on quality care during mandatory parent orientations, Village to Village Quality Child Care Outreach Information; Community Build Boards, child care quality care flyers and brochures.

2.1.2 How can parents apply for services? Check all that apply.

Electronically via online application, mobile app or email.

Provide link

In-person interview or orientation.

Describe agencies where these may occur:

The CCDF Program conducts pre-eligibility outreach activities when it is ready to open for new families. These pre-eligibility activities are completed at a central location, such as the community's Multi-Purpose Center, after working hours. Interested applicants bring the minimum document to be interviewed such as check stubs, 1040 Tax form and ID's of the applicant. Eligibility Specialists conduct an assessment of the check stubs. If the applicant is eligible, he/she is provided with the complete listing of documents to be submitted with the application.

Phone

Mail

At the child care site

At a child care resource and referral agency.

- Through kiosks or online portals at related State/Territory/local agency or organization serving low-income populations.

Describe:

- Through a coordinated application process (e.g., application is linked to other benefits program to allow parents to apply for several programs at one time).

Describe:

- Other strategies.

Describe:

[2.2 Consumer Education Website](#)

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a purpose of the child care program "to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings." (658A(b)(3)) The consumer education requirements address multiple topics that parents and family members need in order to make informed choices and act as their most important teacher and advocate. Lead agencies must certify that they will collect and disseminate the following information through resource and referral agencies or other means. (658E(c)(2)(E))

2.2.1 The State/Territory certifies that it collects and disseminates the following information to parents, providers and the general public:

- information about the availability of the full diversity of child care services that will promote informed child care choices,
- Availability of child care assistance,
- Quality of child care providers (if available),
- Other programs (specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start and Early Head Start, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for which families may also qualify.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs and services,
- Research and best practices in child development, including social and emotional development, early childhood development, meaningful parent and family engagement, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity), and

- State/Territory policies regarding the social-emotional behavioral health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on expulsion of preschool-aged children, in early childhood programs receiving child care assistance (CCDF).

Yes. The State/Territory certifies as of March 1, 2016 that it collects and disseminates the above information to parents, providers and the general public. Describe using 2.2.2 through 2.2.7 below.

No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Substantially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[All these activities are being shared through conversations with parents, providers, and the community. These informations are also shared through outreach efforts. Informational brochures, flyers, program informations are made available in the CCDF Office and the DCCA Licensing Office, During mandatory orientations, packets are made available that contains information about quality child care as well as other early childhood services that are offered by partners such as WIC, Head Start, NAP, etc.](#)

- Information about the availability of the full diversity of child care services that will promote informed child care choices
- Availability of child care assistance,
- Quality of child care providers (if available),
- Other programs (specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF-the CNMI does not have TANF), Head Start and Early Head Start, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for which families may also qualify.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs and services,
- Research and best practices in child development, including all domains

of early childhood development, including social and emotional development, cognitive, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity), and meaningful parent and family engagement,

- State/Territory policies regarding the social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on expulsion of preschool-aged children (children from birth to five for purposes of this requirement)) in early childhood programs receiving CCDF (the CNMI currently does not have policies on expulsion on preschool-aged children).

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [State/Territory policies regarding the social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children \(which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on expulsion of preschool-aged children \(children from birth to five for purposes of this requirement\)\) in early childhood programs receiving CCDF.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[CCDF Policy Change to include Expulsion of Preschool-Aged children in early childhood programs receiving CCDF.](#)CCDF has identified to use as a policy on expulsion standard 2.2.0.8 of the Caring for Our Children 3rd Edition "Preventing Expulsion, suspension, and other Limitations in Services." This will entail a rule change.

[Timeline on the rule change:](#)

[End of May complete draft of CCDF Rules and Regulations](#)

[End of June Final Draft and Review of amendments by the Attorney General's \(AG's\) Office including translations](#)

[End of July public comment](#)

[End of August Final Ruling](#)

[End of September training of providers regarding Expulsion of Preschool Children](#)

Projected start date for each activity: 10/01/15

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implementation of this activity

[DCCA Licensing Program](#)

2.2.2 Describe how the State/Territory makes information available about the full diversity of child care services that will promote informed child care choices, including consumer-friendly strategies such as materials that are culturally responsive and in multiple languages as needed that reflect the literacy levels of consumers, and are easy to access

a) Describe how the State/Territory makes information about the full diversity of child care services available to 1) parents of eligible children, 2) providers and 3) the general public
[The CNMI CCDF Program makes information about full diversity of child care services available to parents, providers, and the general public through postings and announcements. These postings are available at the CCDF Office as well as the Child Care and Licensing Program \(CCLP\) Office. These information are also shared through outreach activities by the DCCA department as well as partner outreach activities.](#)

b) Describe what you provide and how (i.e., methods such as written materials, direct communication, etc.)

[The CCDF and CCLP staff communicate with parents directly through outreach activities regarding the full range of child care options. Printed materials are also distributed and made available.](#)

c) Describe who you partner with to make information about the full diversity of child care choices available

[CCDF Program is in close partnership with the CCLP Program in making the information available. CCDF Program also provides information to the membership of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems regarding the full range of services available to the community.](#)

2.2.3 Describe how the State/Territory makes information about the quality (such as through a quality rating and improvement system, if available, nationally-recognized

accreditation, or other means) of child care services available to the public, including consumer-friendly strategies such as messages that are designed to engage intended audiences and are easy to understand

a) Describe how the State/Territory makes information about child care quality available to 1) parents of eligible children, 2) providers and 3) the general public

The CCDF Program makes available information on quality of child care services to parents, providers, and the general public by engaging in discussions as well as presenting at meetings, orientations, training opportunities, and outreach activities.

b) Describe what you provide and how (i.e., methods such as written materials, direct communication, etc.)

Written materials are provided such as check list, brochures, handouts about quality child care are provided. These checklist, brochures, handouts, are readily available at the CCDF Office, CCLP Office, and with partner agencies when requested. CCDF and CCLP Program Staff also take every opportunity to engage parents, providers, and the general public in discussing about quality child care, by discussing what to look for in quality programs, etc.

c) Describe who you partner with to make information about child care quality available

The CCDF Program partners closely with the Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) to make information about child care quality available.

2.2.4 Describe how the State/Territory shares information with eligible parents about other available human service programs.

For example, does the State/Territory share information about these other programs through linkages from the online application, universal applications, through intake process/front line workers, providers, child care resource and referral agencies or other trusted advisors such as home visitors, pediatricians, faith-based services, etc.? At a minimum, include in your description how you provide information to eligible parents, what you provide and by what methods, and which partners you work with to provide information about other available service programs.

a) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The CNMI does not have TANF.

b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

Availability of this program is shared via direct communication with eligible parents. CCDF

Program partners with the Child Care Licensing Program in sharing this information. Head Start brochures and application forms are made available at the CCDF Office and if needed, Child Care Staff is able to refer families to the Head Start Office.

c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The LIHEAP Program is housed under the same department as CCDF Program. Information regarding this program is shared via direct communication . Informational brochures regarding LIHEAP is included in the CCDF orientation packets provided to families and made available in the CCDF and CCLP Offices.

d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP- formerly known as Food Stamps)

The CNMI does not have SNAP; however, Food Stamp Office is housed under the same department. Monthly coordinated outreach activities are conducted by the department to share information regarding different programs and services. Parents and the general public are provided with direct information, brochures, and flyers regarding this program.

e) Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)

CCDF Program Office partners with WIC. Informational brochures are made available in the CCDF Office as well as in the child care provider sites. Information is also shared via direct communication.

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP)

The CNMI does not have CACFP.

g) Medicaid

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures found in the CCDF Office as well as through direct communication.

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

The CNMI does not have this program.

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures found in the CCDF Office as well as through direct communication

j) Other State/Federally Funded Child Care Programs (e.g., state pre-kindergarten)

The CNMI does not have a state pre-Kindergarten program.

k) Other early childhood programs (e.g., Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program)

Availability of these programs are made through flyers and brochures found at the CCDF Office as well as through direct communication.

2.2.5 Describe how the State/Territory shares information with providers (where applicable) to link families to these other available human service programs.

For example, does the State/Territory provide information to providers through CCR&Routreach, as a condition of their contract or voucher agreement, through community-based hub agencies that partner with subsidy providers, county/local collaboration, through quality rating and improvements systems, etc?

a) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The CNMI does not have TANF

b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

Informational brochures are made available in the CCDF Office and CCLP Office.

c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP- formerly known as Food Stamps)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

e) Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP)

The CNMI does not have this program.

g) Medicaid

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

The CNMI does not have this program.

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as

well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

j) Other State/Federally Funded Child Care Programs (example-State Pre-K)

The CNMI does not have this program.

k) Other early childhood programs (e.g., Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program)

Availability of the program is made through flyers and brochures shared with the providers as well as through direct communication. Information regarding this program is included in the Community Resource Packet.

2.2.6 Describe how the State/Territory makes available information to parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, providers (see also section 6) about research and best practices in child development, including all domains of early childhood development, including social and emotional development, cognitive, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity), and meaningful parent and family engagement. (658E(c)(2)(E)(VI))

a) Describe how the State/Territory makes information about research and best practices in child development available to 1) parents of eligible children, 2) providers and 3) the general public

Information is provided through direct communication, shared through parent mandatory orientation, and by making available the recently updated Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's) to the general public. Informational flyers are also provided to the general public.

b) Describe what you provide and how (i.e., methods such as written materials, direct communication, etc.)

Written materials such as the Early Learning Guidelines books, direct communications, brochures, flyers and posters.

c) Describe who you partner with to make information about research and best practices in child development available

Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) as well as other partner agencies serving the same population such as ECCS, Home Visiting Program, EHS, etc.

2.2.7 Describe how information on the State/Territory's policies regarding the social-

emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on expulsion of preschool-aged children (from birth to five for purposes of this requirement), in early childhood programs receiving CCDF is collected and disseminated to parents, providers and the general public. (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(VII))

a) Describe how the State/Territory makes information regarding social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention support models, available to 1) parents of eligible children, 2) providers and 3) the general public. At minimum, describe **what** you provide (e.g., early childhood mental health consultation services to child care programs) and **how** (i.e., methods such as written materials, direct communication, etc.) for each group:

i. Parents

We offer the information through direct communication, written materials, orientations, and outreach activities.

ii. Providers

We offer the information through direct communication, written materials, orientations, and outreach activities as well as trainings and technical assistance.

iii. General public

We offer the information through direct communication, written materials, orientations, and outreach activities

b) Describe any partners used to make information regarding social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children available

Child Care Licensing Program, programs under public health such as Community Guidance Center and ECCS.

c) Does the State have a written policy regarding preventing expulsion of:

Preschool children (from birth to five) in early childhood programs receiving child care assistance?

Yes.

If yes, If yes, describe how the State/Territory makes information about that policy available to parents, providers and the general public (what you provide, how you provide and any partners used) and provide a link

No.

School-age children from programs receiving child care assistance?

Yes.

If yes, describe how the State/Territory makes information about that policy available to 1) parents, 2) providers and 3) the general public (what you provide, how you provide and any partners used) and provide a link

No.

2.2.8 Coordination with Other Partners to Increase Access to Developmental Screenings

The State/Territory must develop and describe procedures for providing information on and referring families to existing developmental screening services. (658E(c)(2)E(ii)) At a minimum, the State/Territory must establish procedures to provide information to families and child care providers on: (1) Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and developmental screening services available under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and (2) a description of how a family or child care provider receiving CCDF may utilize the resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for children receiving CCDF who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, which may include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays.

Describe the status of the State/Territory's procedures for providing information on and referring families to existing developmental screening services.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above - by March 1, 2016.

List the Lead Agency policy citation(s) and:

a) Describe procedures, including timelines for when infants, toddlers and preschoolers should be screened

b) Describe how CCDF families or child care providers receiving CCDF may utilize the resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for CCDF children at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Partially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[Early Intervention Program handles Part C and offers developmental screenings to infants and toddlers. Public Health also conducts developmental screenings for all children at Well-Child visits \(Policy N9007- Public Health/Children's Clinic\). These developmental screenings are completed during the preventive care visits at 6, 12, 18, and 36 months using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: 3rd Edition \(ASQ:3\). Majority of Child Care and Development Fund Program \(CCDF\) providers are also trained in the ASQ:3.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [Establish procedures to provide information to families and providers \(1\) Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under Title XIX of the Social Security Act \(42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.\) and developmental screening services available under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.\);](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Meet with PSS Early Intervention Program as well as the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems \(ECCS\) to discuss protocols and/or procedure for referring families and/or providers receiving CCDF funds to developmental screening services. These meetings will be done monthly. Since there is currently no policy established for referring families and/or providers to developmental](#)

screening services, a rule change must be completed. The following timeline will be followed to meet this requirement:

End of May draft amendment of CCDF Rules and Regulations for review by the Attorney Generals's Office

End of June Final Draft and translations of the Amendments

End of July Public Comments

End of August Final Ruling

End of September training on providers regarding this requirement

Projected start date for each activity: 10/01/2015

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity CCDF Program

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implementation of this activity

Child Care Licensing Program, PSS Early Intervention Services, and ECCS.

2.2.9 Describe how the State/Territory meets the requirement to maintain a record of substantiated parental complaints. (658E(c)(2)(C))

a) How does the State/Territory define substantiated parental complaint

A substantiated parental complaint is one that is considered valid with evidence.

b) How does the State/Territory maintain a record of substantiated parental complaints about providers (e.g., how long are records maintained and in what format)

Hard copies are kept in the provider's files and kept there for as long as the provider is licensed.

c) How does the State/Territory make substantiated parental complaints available to the public on request

Copies are available provided they follow the procedure for the CNMI Open Government Act.

d) Describe how the State/Territory defines and maintains complaints from others about providers

Complaints from others are maintained the same way as complaints from parents.

2.2.10 How will the Lead Agency or partners provide outreach and services to eligible families for whom English is not their first language?

Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- Application in other languages (application document, brochures, provider notices)
 - Informational materials in non-English languages
 - Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
 - Website in non-English languages
 - Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
 - Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
 - Bilingual outreach workers
 - Partnerships with community-based organizations
 - Other
-
- None

2.2.11 If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please list the primary languages offered (top 3) or specify that the State/Territory has the ability to have translation/interpretation in all primary and secondary languages

Languages spoken by the CCDF and CCLP staff: Chamorro, Carolinian, and Filipino

2.2.12 Describe how the Lead Agency or partners provide outreach and services to eligible persons with disabilities

CCDF is able to provide one on one outreach to eligible persons with disabilities. The CCDF Program will partner with the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc.

(NMPASI) a local non-profit organization, that administers grant programs from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), and the Human Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the U.S. Department of Education (DOE)/Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and the Social Security Administration (SSA)

2.3 Website for Consumer Education

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States and Territories have a website describing processes for licensing and monitoring child care providers, processes for conducting criminal background checks, and offenses that prevent individuals from being child care providers, and aggregate information on the number of deaths, serious injuries and child abuse.

The State/Territory must make public certain information about the results of such monitoring on a website in a way that is consumer-friendly and in an easily accessible format. (658E(c)(2)(D)) In order for a website to be a useful tool for parents, it should be easy to navigate, with a minimum number of clicks, and in plain language. States and Territories must post the results of the monitoring on the website no later than November 19, 2017. All other components of the website must be completed no later than September 30, 2016.

2.3.1 Describe the status of State/Territory's consumer education website.

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above - by March 1, 2016.

Provide the link to the website:

and describe how the consumer education website meets the requirements to:

- a) Share provider-specific information about health and safety, licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider (including the last date of inspection, and any history of violations). Describe

- b) Include a description of health and safety requirements and licensing or regulatory requirements for child care providers. Describe

c) Include a description of the processes for licensing, background checks, monitoring, and offenses that prevent individuals from being providers. Describe

d) Provide information about the number of deaths, number of serious injuries as defined by the State/Territory and the number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings. Describe

e) Describe how the website is consumer-friendly, for example, allowing multiple ways to search for providers, defining terms such as exempt care and corrective action plans, presents the results of monitoring inspections in plain language, providing frequently asked questions, is accessible in multiple languages upon request and to persons with disabilities through multiple formats, differentiating between violations based on risk to children, and easy to locate and navigate. Describe

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date. Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016 for all components of the website except posting the results of the monitoring on the website which is November 19, 2017) [11/19/2017](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Partially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[CCDF has a consumer education website that is currently being populated to address requirements.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [Share provider-specific information about health and safety, licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider \(including the last date of inspection, and any history of violations\).](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet

requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

By end of June meet with website tech to discuss all information to be included in the CCLP website

Throughout July, August, and mid September, upload all provider-specific information about health and safety, licensing or regulatory requirements

By end of September, all information included in the website

By November 19, 2017 Monitoring reports will be posted and made available in the website

Projected start date for each activity: [March 01, 2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [November 19, 2017](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\)](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implementation of this activity

[DCCA Secretary's Office](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [A description of the processes for licensing, background checks, monitoring, and offenses that prevent individuals from being providers.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

By end of June meet with website tech to discuss all information to be included in the CCLP website

Throughout July, August, and mid September, upload information on processes for licensing, background checks, and offenses that prevent individuals from being providers

By end of September, all information included in the website

Projected start date for each activity: [March 01, 2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\)](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete

implementation of this activity

DCCA Secretary's Office

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented Provide annual aggregate information about the number of deaths, number of serious injuries as defined by the State/Territory and the number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings. Describe

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

By end of June meet with website tech to discuss all information to be included in the CCLP website

Throughout July, August, and mid September, gather data on number of deaths, number of serious injuries and number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings and upload unto the CCLP Website

By end of September, all information included in the website

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implementation of this activity

DCCA Secretary's Office

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented The website is consumer-friendly, for example, allowing multiple ways to search for providers, defining terms such as exempt care and corrective action plans, presents the results of monitoring inspections in plain language, providing frequently asked questions, is accessible in multiple languages upon request and to persons with disabilities through multiple formats, differentiating between violations based on risk to children, and easy to locate and navigate.

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Through out June, July, and August, work as website is being populated with the

information, CCLP and CCDF Office will continue to provide feedback regarding to the site's consumer friendliness and accessible format; Website tech will update and make necessary changes per feedback received from CCLP and CCDF. CCLP will also inform providers, partners, and the community with respect to the availability of the CCLP website and ask partners for feedback.

By end of September, all required information should be completed and the website is consumer-friendly and easily accessible.

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\)](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implementation of this activity

[Child Care and Deveopment Fund](#), community partners, such as [NMC](#), [ECCS](#), [Head Start](#), etc. and the community.

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

The expanded purposes of CCDBG highlight the opportunities States and Territories have to "deliver high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance"; and "to improve child care and development of participating children." (658A(b)) Young children learn in the context of their relationships with adults, including their child care teacher or provider. The unintentional consequence of child care assistance that is linked to adult work and school obligation is that child care arrangements - and the opportunity for children to form trusting relationships with teachers - are often interrupted and unstable. Child care financial assistance policies that make it easier to get and keep assistance support continuity of care and relationships between the child and child care provider and enable parents to stay employed or complete training/education. Child care support that extends until families are able to pay the full cost of care themselves promotes longer lasting economic stability for families. CCDF funds may support families until they reach 85% of State Median Income (SMI).

The CCDBG Act of 2014 included requirements to establish minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination periods, requiring that States and Territories have a process to account for irregular fluctuations in earnings, a policy ensuring that families' work schedules are not

disrupted by program requirements, policies to provide for job search of not less than three (3) months, and to describe policies for graduated phase- out of assistance. The definition of an eligible child includes that a family's assets may not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family). Procedures for enrollment of homeless children pending completion of documentation are also now required. There is nothing in statute to prohibit States from establishing policies that extend eligibility beyond 12 months or establish other similar policies to align program requirements that allow children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start, state or local pre-kindergarten and other collaborative programs to finish the program year and to promote continuity for families receiving services through multiple benefits programs.

3.1 Eligible Children and Families

In order to be eligible for services, children must (1) be under the age of 13, (2) reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size, and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family); and who (3)(a) resides with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program; or (b) is receiving, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in (3a.). (658P(4))

3.1.1 Eligibility Criteria Based upon Child's Age

a) The CCDF program serves children from 6 (weeks/months/years) to 12 years (through age 12).

b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care?(658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3))



Yes, and the upper age is 18 (may not equal or exceed age 19). Provide the Lead Agency definition of physical or mental incapacity: **Physical incapacity** incapable of self-care as verified by a medical physician **Mental incapacity** incapable of self care as verified by a medical physician



No

c) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but

below age 19 years who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B))



Yes and the upper age is 18 (may not equal or exceed age 19)



No.

3.1.2 How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

a) residing with -

children who are physically living with the natural, foster or adoptive parents, legal guardians, or a person acting in the place of a parent

b) in loco parentis -

birth, foster, or adoptive parent, guardian or a person acting in the place of a parent

3.1.3 Eligibility Criteria Based on Reason for Care

a) How does the Lead Agency define "working, attending job training and education" for the purposes of eligibility at the point of determination? Provide a brief description below, including allowable activities and if a minimum number of hours is required by State/Territory (not a federal requirement).

* working:

parent or legal guardian engaged in an activity in exchange for wage or salary for at least 30 hours a week;

Job Search: an activity that demonstrate an individual is actively seeking potential employment. Qualifying job search activities include but is not limited to the following: completing an application in person, completing on-line computer applications at employment agencies and/or community agencies, engaging in interviews, registration at the CNMI Labor Office, phone inquiries with a minimum of 10 calls per week, volunteer hours not to exceed 20 hours a week at a prospective employer, volunteer hours not to exceed 20 hours at a community center. A parent or legal guardian in job search and is actively seeking employment is eligible for up to 90 calendar days of subsidized child care. During job search the parent's co-payments are waived.

A parent or legal guardian who may experience a break in employment is eligible up to 90 calendar days of subsidized child care provided the parent or legal guardian is actively seeking employment. This 90 calendar days maybe taken all at one time or broken into small segments for a total of 90 calendar days per year as needed by the parent.

A parent or legal guardian who may need an off-island treatment as recommended by a medical physician is eligible for subsidized child care up to 90 calendar days. This 90 calendar days maybe taken all at one time or broken into small segments for a total of 90 calendar days per year as needed by the parent.

Parent or legal guardians who may need medical or maternity leave as verified by a medical physician maybe eligible for up to 90 calendar days of subsidized child care while on sick leave, maternity leave, or family leave as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 if documented as necessary from a physician and employer.

In the event of a federal or state declared emergency or disaster, work will be defined as an activity in exchange for wage or salary for at least 10 hours a week. Activity will include re-building of one's primary residence, place of work/employment, is a volunteer on recovery efforts as verified by the organization the parent is a volunteer for, and/or a first responder. This definition of work will remain in effect for a maximum of 90 days from the date of declaration of the disaster and maybe extended on a case to case basis for another 30 days provided there is documented need for the extension. Immediately after the 90 days (or if needed to include the additional 30 days extention), the definition of work will immediately revert back to 30 hours a week.

*** attending job training**

Parents or legal guardians who are attending a job training, certification, or diploma program for at least 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month maybe eligible for subsidized child care. These job trainings maybe sactioned by the Public School System, Workforce Investment Agency (WIA), the Norther Marianas College and/or an accredited or recognized vocational training program. Job training activities may include but is not limited to the following: job readiness, vocational training, such as carpentry, auto repair, electrician, small engine repair, other trainings such as English as a Second Language, computer skills, medical billing, etc.

In the event of a federal or state declared emergency or disaster, job training hours will be considered at least 10 hours a week. Activity will include re-building of one's primary residence, place of work/employment, is a volunteer on recovery efforts as verified by the organization the parent is a volunteer for, and/or a first responder. This definition of job training will remain in effect for a maximum of 90 days from the date of declaration of the disaster and maybe extended on a case to case basis for another 30 days provided there is documented need for the extension. Immediately after the 90 days (or if needed to include the additional 30 days extention), the definition of job training will immediately revert back to 30 hours a week.

* attending education

parents or legal guardians who are attending an educational program on a full time basis as defined by the Northern Marianas College or NMC, CNMI Public School System (PSS), or NMC Adult Basic Education (ABE). Educational program may also include: clinical, internship, practicum, work/study as defined by these agencies or government entity. Parents or legal guardians attending Distance learning/online course or education via electronic media maybe eligible for subsidinzed child care provided: the distance learning institution is recognized and accredited by the US Department of Education ([htt://ope.ed.gov/accreditation](http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation)), the parent or legal guardian is formally enrolled in the institution, has an educational plan, projected graduation date, identified coursework hours that need to be completed every month, quarterly, or semester, and the number of hours approved for child care shall not exceed the number of credit hours per week for the course as defined by the institution.

The main campus of the Northern Marianas College is located in the island of Saipan. Residents of Rota and Tinian must stay in Saipan in order to fully participate in colledge education. Therefore, parents or legal guardians who are residents of Rota and Tinian who are full time students and staying in Saipan maybe eligible for subsidized child care provided the parents has maintained his/her residency in Rota or Tinian.

In the event of a federal or state declared emergency or disaster, attending education will be defined as an activity at least 10 hours a week. Activity will include re-building of one's primary residence, place of work/employment, is a volunteer on recovery efforts as verified by the organization the parent is a volunteer for, and/or a first responder. This definition of attending education will remain in effect for a maximum of 90 days from the

date of declaration of the disaster and maybe extended on a case to case basis for another 30 days provided there is documented need for the extension. Immediately after the 90 days (or if needed to include the additional 30 days extention), the definition of attending education will immediately revert back to full time as defined by the institution wherein the parent or legal guardian is enrolled.

b) Does the Lead Agency allow parents to qualify for CCDF assistance on the basis of education and training participation alone (without additional minimum work requirements)?

Yes.

No.

If no, describe additional requirements

c) Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children in protective services?

Yes. If yes, how does the Lead Agency define "protective services" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a brief description below.

1) Definition of protective services -

Teen Parent: an unmarried, minor parent under the age of 19 who has not obtained a high school diploma or GED equivalent, who lives at the home of his/her parents, an adult relative, or a legal guardian and is attending education full time;

Military deployment: a parent or legal guardian who has been deployed off island due to military activities. The children will continue to be eligible to receive child care services regardless of the needs of the persons acting in locos parentis

Off island treatment: a treatment that is medically necessary and not available on island, as verified and recommended by a medical physician or MedicalReferral Office; the children will continue to receive child care services regardless of the needs of the persons acting in locos parentis

Homelessness: individuals who lack a fixed (stationary, permanent, and not subject to change), regular (used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis), and adequate nighttime (sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments) residence and includes children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a

similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;

On a case-by-case basis families affected by a federally or state declared disaster who maybe at risk of disaster related hazards such as environmental, health and mental health. During a federally or state declared disaster, the following will fall under protective services:

1. families caring for a family member with a serious disaster related medical condition.
2. families who are rebuilding their homes and/or are now temporarily living in shelters
3. Homeless families as defined above
4. families assisting in the rebuilding of their place of work or employment
5. volunteers and first responders who are assisting in rebuilding the community

2) Does the Lead Agency waive the co-payment and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services on a case-by-case basis? (658E(c)(5))

Yes.

No.

Note - If the Lead Agency elects to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities for CCDF purposes these children are considered to be in protective services and should be included in the protective services definition above.

No.

3.1.4 Eligibility Criteria Based on Family Income

a) How does the Lead Agency define "income" for the purposes of eligibility at the point of determination?

* Definition of income -

Gross income means any benefit in cash which is received by the individual as a result of current or past labor or services (before deductions), business activities, interest in real or personal property or as a contribution from persons, organizations, or assistance from agencies such as wages and salary

b) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below. **Complete** columns (a) and (b) based upon maximum eligibility initial entry into the CCDF program. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the current SMI. Complete columns (e) and (f) with the maximum "exit" eligibility level if applicable and below the federal limit of 85% of current SMI.

Note - If the income eligibility limits are not statewide, check here

Describe how many jurisdictions set their own income eligibility limits

Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the state.

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(c) (IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Entry" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(d) (IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(e) (IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Exit" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(f) (IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI [Divide (e) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI
1	2216.00	1884.00				

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(c) (IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Entry" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(d) (IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(e) (IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Exit" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI	(f) (IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI [Divide (e) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI
2	2216.00	1884.00				
3	2579.00	2192.00				
4	3793.00	3224.00				
5	4468.00	3798.0				

Reminder - Income limits must be provided in terms of current State Median Income (SMI) (or Territory Median Income) even if federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. Federal [poverty guidelines](http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.cfm) are available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.cfm>.

c) SMI Source and year [The CNMI will use figures and data included in the Bankruptcy Forms 22A-1 and 22C-1 for cases filed between April 1, 2015 to May 14, 2015, inclusive.](#)

d) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on: [March 1, 2016](#)

e) Provide the link to the income eligibility limits cnmiccdf.org

3.1.5 Graduated Phase-Out of Assistance

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that requires States and Territories to provide for a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased at the time of re-determination, but remains below the federal threshold of 85% of State median income. Providing a graduated phase-out supports long-term family economic stability by allowing for wage growth and a tapered transition out of the child care subsidy program. (658E (c)(2)(N)(iv)) This might be achieved through policies such as establishing a second income eligibility threshold at redetermination (e.g., establishing a different eligibility threshold for families first applying for assistance and those already receiving assistance, sometimes called and "exit threshold") or by granting a sustained period of continued assistance to the family before termination.

Describe the status of the State/Territory's policy regarding graduated phase-out of assistance.

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016.

List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the policies and procedures for graduated phase-out

Families will continue to receive subsidy provided they do not go over the 85% of SMI.

- Not implemented. The State must provide a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste tables here. Your responses here will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's status toward complete implementation for any requirement(s) not fully implemented (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

3.1.6 Fluctuation in Earnings

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the Plan shall demonstrate how the State/Territory's (or designated local entity) processes for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings. (658E(c)(2)(N)(i)(II))

Note - this change requires that States and Territories have policies to account for the fact that some parents with seasonal or other types of work schedules may have irregular earnings over the course of a year, including changes that temporarily exceed 85% of SMI. States and Territories should have procedures to guide how eligibility and copayments are set in a manner to take such circumstances into account. For example, averaging family income over a period of time to broaden the scope of income verification to be more reflective of annual income rather than tied to a limited time frame that may have seasonal irregularities.

Describe the status of the State/Territory's policy related to the fluctuation in earnings requirement.

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016.

List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the circumstances that cover irregular fluctuations of earnings pursuant to this requirement

- Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [9/30/16](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's status toward complete implementation for any requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [A process for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

By end of March: CCDF Administrator will provide Eligibility Specialists resources on how other states and territories are accommodating fluctuations in earnings

By End of April: Eligibility Specialists would have reviewed and discussed resources provided

By End of June: Draft of policy on calculating fluctuations will have been formulated by the Eligibility Specialists and forwarded to CCDF Administrator for review and comments

By end of July: CCDF Administrator and Eligibility specialist will have discussed and finalized policy on Calculating Fluctuations

By end of September: Policy on calculating for Fluctuation will be sent out in a Memorandum for compliance

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [CCDF Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[CCDF will be responsible in addressing this requirement](#)

3.1.7 Describe how the Lead Agency documents, verifies and maintains applicant information.

Check the information that the Lead Agency documents. There are no federal requirements for specific documentation or verification procedures.

Reminder - Lead Agencies are reminded that, for purposes of implementing the citizenship verification requirements mandated by title IV of Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity

Reconciliation Act, only the citizenship and immigration status of the child, who is the primary beneficiary of the child care benefit, is relevant for eligibility purposes (ACYF-PI-CC-98-08). States may not deny child care benefits to an eligible child because the parent(s), legal guardians, persons standing in loco parentis, or other household members have not provided information regarding their immigration status. In addition, verification of child citizen status is not required when the child is served in a program meeting Early Head Start/Head Start standards, such as in Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships, or public educational standards which may include pre-k settings (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/pi-2008-01>).

Applicant identity.

Describe:

CCDF Program will request the following documents as proof of identity: photo ID such as current passport, CNMI Mayor's ID, Driver's License, Notarized Affidavit of being a single parent; ID for health benefits, Voter Registration Card, US Military ID, Certificate of Naturalization

Applicant's relationship to the child.

Describe:

CCDF program will request a copy of the child's birth certificate, recently completed and filed 1040 Tax Form, and/or court document; court documents regarding guardianship;

Child's information for determining eligibility (e.g., identity, age, etc.).

Describe:

copy of birth certificate, Social Security Card, current passport, Mayor's ID

Work.

Describe:

CCDF program prescribed form for employment verification, 3 latest check stubs indicating applicant's complete name as indicated in the ID's provided, number of hours worked, complete name of employer, place of work, CW (CNMI Only Transitional Worker)-1 Permit, letter from employer of start date, completed CCDF Program Application Form

Job Training or Educational Program.

Describe:

Copy of school or job training documents such as acceptance letter, schedule of classes,

Family Income.

Describe:

Employment verification for all income earners in the family, check stubs

Household composition.

Describe:

[Notarized affidavit as a single parent, rental or lease agreement, Statement from Landlord, School Record, Medical/Insurance Records](#)

Applicant Residence.

Describe:

[Rental or lease agreement, map to residence, statement from landlord](#)

Other.

Describe:

Reminder - Lead Agencies are reminded that, for purposes of implementing the citizenship verification requirements mandated by title IV of Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, only the citizenship and immigration status of the child, who is the primary beneficiary of the child care benefit, is relevant for eligibility purposes (ACYF-PI-CC-98-08). States may not deny child care benefits to an eligible child because the parent(s), legal guardians, persons standing in loco parentis, or other household members have not provided information regarding their immigration status. In addition, verification of child citizen status is not required when the child is served in a program meeting Early Head Start/Head Start standards, such as in Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships, or public educational standards which may include pre-k settings (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/pi-2008-01>).

3.1.8 Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to assure the timeliness of eligibility determinations upon receipt of applications?

Time limit for making eligibility determinations.

Describe length of time :

[Maximum of 15 days to make eligibility determinations.](#)

Track and monitor the eligibility determination process

Other.

Describe:

None

3.1.9 Informing parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual

penalties associated with the TANF work requirement

Per CCDF regulations, Lead Agencies are required to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age (98.16(9) and 98.33(b)). This requirement did not change under the reauthorization. Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure, pursuant that TANF families with young children will be informed of their right not to be sanctioned if they meet the criteria set forth by the State TANF agency in accordance with section 407(e)(2) of the Social Security Act.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care.

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the CCDF Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record.

a) Identify the TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions:

State/Territory TANF Agency [not applicable - CNMI does not have a TANF program.](#)

b) Provide the following definitions established by the TANF agency.

"appropriate child care":

"reasonable distance":

"unsuitability of informal child care":

"affordable child care arrangements":

c) How are parents who receive TANF benefits informed about the exception to individual penalties associated with the TANF work requirements?

In writing

Verbally

Other.

Describe:

List the citation to this TANF policy.

List:

3.1.10 The Lead Agency certifies that it will require a family member to certify that the family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000. A check-off on the application is sufficient

Yes. The Lead Agency certifies that it will require families to certify that the family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 no later than September 30, 2016.

3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

At a minimum, CCDF requires Lead Agencies to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, or in families with very low incomes. This did not change under reauthorization. Prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., establishment of a waiting list or ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served). Lead Agencies may fulfill priority requirements in other ways such as higher payment rates for providers caring for children with special needs or waiving co-payments for families with very low incomes (at or below the federal poverty level). (658E(c)(3)(B))

3.2.1 Describe how the Lead Agency will prioritize or target child care services for the following children and families (658E(c)(3)(B)), including definitions, any time limits, grace periods or priority rules in the description:

a. Provide definition of "Children with special needs": children who have been tested and determined to need special education and/or related services. These children should have a formal and current Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

and describe how services are prioritized:

these children will be a priority over other CCDF-Eligible children. There will be no time limits and prioritizes quality funds for providers serving these children.

b. Provide definition of "Families with very low incomes": families with gross monthly income that does not exceed the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines

and describe how services are prioritized:

these families will be a priority over other CCDF-eligible families and families engaged in full time education with zero income will have their co-payments waived.

c. Describe how services for families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF are prioritized (Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act)
The CNMI does not have TANF.

3.2.2 Improving Access for Homeless Children and Families.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 places greater emphasis on serving homeless children and families. Stable access to high-quality child care provides tremendous benefits to all children, especially our most vulnerable children. Children and families who experience homelessness face many challenges. Improving access to child care can buffer children and families from the challenges and risks associated with homelessness by supporting children's learning and development in safe, stable and nurturing environments. Under the new law, States and Territories are required to use CCDF funds to 1) allow homeless children to receive CCDF assistance after an initial eligibility determination but before providing required documentation (including documentation related to immunizations); 2) providing training and technical assistance to child care providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families (addressed in Section 6); and 3) conduct specific outreach to homeless families. (658E(c)(3))

States and Territories also must establish a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care (if served by the Lead Agency) to receive CCDF assistance while their families are taking the necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements as described in Section 5. This flexibility will make it significantly easier for these vulnerable families to access child care services. This language is consistent with current requirements established through CCDF regulations in 1998, which required a grace period in which children can receive services while families take the necessary actions to comply with the immunization requirements. (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)(I)) ACF recommends States and Territories consult the definition of homeless in the McKinney-Vento Act (section 725 of subtitle VII-B) as you implement the requirements of this section as that definition is consistent with the required CCDF administrative data reporting requirements.

Describe the status of the State/Territory's procedures to enroll and provide outreach to homeless families and establish a grace period for children in foster care, if served, for meeting immunization requirements

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016. Describe the following:
- a. Procedures to increase access to CCDF subsidies for homeless children and families, including the grace period to comply with immunization and health and safety requirements
 - b. Procedures to conduct outreach to homeless families to improve access to child care services
 - c. Procedures to provide a grace period to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements to expedite enrollment for children who are in foster care if served by the Lead Agency to improve access to child care services

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Not yet started](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [1\) allow homeless children to receive CCDF assistance after an initial eligibility determination but before providing required documentation \(including documentation related to immunizations\);](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Identify partners who may assist in this requirement and engage if needed, into an](#)

MOU. Monthly meetings with identified partners to come up with procedures to increase access to CCDF subsidies for homeless children, procedures to conduct outreach, procedures to provide a grace period to comply with immunization etc.

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01//2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity **CCDF is responsible for complete implementation of this activity**

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

CCDF will complete this requirement.

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented **2) providing training and technical assistance to child care providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families (addressed in Section 6); and**

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Create training and technical assistance resources for providers on homeless children and families; provide the training and technical assistance

Projected start date for each activity: 05/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity **CCDF Program**

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

CCDF will partner with Division of Youth Services (DYS) and other partners who serve the same population.

3.3 Protection for Working Parents

3.3.1 Twelve Month Eligibility

The CCDBG Act of 2014 establishes a 12-month eligibility period for CCDF families. States are required to demonstrate in the Plan that no later than September 30, 2016 each child who receives assistance will be considered to meet all eligibility requirements for such assistance and will receive such assistance, for not less than 12 months before the State redetermines the eligibility of the child, regardless of changes in income (as long as income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85% of State median income) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or education activities. (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) &(ii))

Note that this change means a State may not terminate CCDF assistance during the 12 month period if a family has an increase in income that exceeds the State's income eligibility threshold, but not the federal threshold of 85% SMI.

In addition, this change means the State may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the 12 month period if family experiences a temporary job loss or temporary change in participation in a training or education activity. For example, if a working parent is temporarily absent from employment due to extended medical leave, changes in seasonal work schedule, or a parent enrolled in training or educational program is temporarily not attending class between semesters, the state should not terminate assistance.

Describe the status of the State's establishment of a 12-month eligibility re-determination period for CCDF families.

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe circumstances considered temporary changes in work, education or training that are not subject to termination

List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe circumstances considered temporary changes in work, education or training that are not subject to termination

The CCDF Program implements a 12-month Eligibility and redetermination period. The 12-month Eligibility and re-determination is described in [CCDF Rules and Regulations Section 55-60-405 \(4\)](#) that states eligible parents will be re-determined "not less frequently than every 12 months from the month eligibility was determined.

The following will be considered as temporary changes in work, education or training: fluctuations in income due to overtime, or seasonal work changes such as hotel industry and/or catering business) cancellation of classes as defined by the NMC or training facility.

- Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to

complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's status toward complete implementation for any requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities -What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

3.3.2 State and Territory option to terminate assistance prior to 12 months

The CCDBG Act of 2014 provides States and Territories the option - but does not require them - to terminate assistance prior to re-determination at 12 months if a parent loses employment or if he or she stops attending a job training or education program (i.e., if the parent experiences a non-temporary change in their status as working, or participating in a training or education program). However, prior to terminating the subsidy, the State/Territory must provide a period of continued child care assistance of at least 3 months to allow parents to engage in job search, resume work, or to attend an education or training program as soon as possible.

(658E(c)(2)(N)(iii)) Nothing in the statute prohibits the State/Territory from starting a new 12-month eligibility and redetermination period if families are eligible at the end of their job search, training or education attendance period.

Note that unless the State allows a minimum 3-month job search period - the State/Territory may not exercise the option to terminate assistance based on a parent's non-temporary job loss or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program prior to the end of the minimum 12-month eligibility and re-determination period. The statute does not specify any documentation that States/Territories must require parents to submit regarding activities during periods of job search or finding training or education program requirements for this period.

Does the State/Territory terminate assistance prior to 12 months due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or education program?

- Yes, the State/Territory terminates assistance prior to 12 months due to parent's loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or education program ONLY. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the circumstances considered to be non-temporary job, education or training loss and provide the duration allowed for job search or resuming attendance in training or education programs
- Families will no longer receive assistance once they are no longer in an approved activity of working, going to school or engage in training and has completed the 90 days of job search.

Section 55-60-405 (4) indicates families will go through redetermination "not less frequently than every 12 months from the month eligibility was determined.

Job Search is defined as an activity that demonstrate an individual is actively seeking potential employment. These activities may include but is nto limited to: completing job applications in person, completing online applications at employment agencies, and/or community agencies, engaging in interviews, registration at the CNMI Labor Office, and phone interviews. Memorandum FY 15 No. 8 dated December 1, 2015 has extended the number of days of Job Search Activity from 30 calendar days to 90 calendar days.

- No, the State/Territory does not allow this option.

3.3.3 Prevent Disruption of Work

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States and Territories must describe in the Plan the procedures and policies in place to ensure that parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under TANF) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment, education or job training activities in order to comply with the State/Territory's or designated local entity's requirements for redetermination of eligibility for assistance. (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii))

Examples include implementing re-determination strategies to verify income and employment electronically as opposed to more onerous practices such as asking parents and families to come to the subsidy office for an in-person visit, or aligning eligibility with other early care and education or public benefits programs to collect information centrally. The process by which States and Territories collect eligibility documentation represents a potential barrier to services, particularly when documentation can only be provided in-person during standard work hours. States and Territories can offer a variety of family-friendly mechanisms for submitting documentation for eligibility determinations and/or re-determination.

Describe the status of the State/Territory's redetermination procedures and policies to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving TANF) do not have their employment, education or job training unduly disrupted in order to comply with the State/Territory's or designated local entity's requirements for redetermination of eligibility.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016.

List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the policies and procedures for not unduly disrupting employment

CCDF Program ensures that parents are not unduly disrupted during their activity (work, training, education) to submit documents by doing the following:

Accepting renewal applications/documentations throughout the month of renewals; submission of documents and applications electronically; authorizing other individuals to submit documents on their behalf; 15 days of pick up of application and 15 days for submission; advance notice is provided; for unforeseen reasons, clients may submit after submission deadline and to work with ES on dates

CCDF Rules and Regulations Section 55-60-401 Reporting Changes indicate that "A parent who is a recipient of subsidized child care services shall be responsible to report in writing in a prescribed form to the Child Care Program within 10 calendar days of the occurrence of any changes in monthly gross income and source of income, address, contact number, family member size, marital status, providers, ..."

All eligible clients are re-determined in the month of October. Parents may also use the opportunity to report any changes during the month of April and this will be called an "Interim Report" using the CCDF Prescribed Form.

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this

requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[3.4 Family Contribution to Payment](#)

The statute requires Lead Agencies to establish a sliding fee scale that varies based on income and the size of the family to be used in determining each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) to the cost of child care that is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF. (658E(c)(5) In addition to income and size of the family, the Lead Agency may use other factors when determining family contributions/co-payments. The sliding fee scale is subject to review by ACF as part of ongoing monitoring efforts to CCDBG compliance.

3.4.1 Provide the CCDF copayments in the chart below according to family size.

Note - If the sliding fee scale is not statewide, check here and describe how many jurisdictions set their own sliding fee scale

Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the State.

Family Size	(a) Lowest "Entry" Income Level Where Copayment First Applied	(b) What is the monthly copayment for a family of this size upon initial entry into CCDF?	(c) What is the percent of income for (b)?	(d) Maximum Highest "Entry" Income Level Before No Longer Eligible	(e) What is the monthly copayment for a family of this size upon initial entry into CCDF?	(f) What is the percent of income for (e)?
1	\$1	\$18.00	NA	\$1884	\$18.00	1%
2	\$1	\$18.00	NA	\$1884	\$18.00	1%
3	\$1	\$31.00	NA	\$2192	\$21.00	1%
4	\$1	\$43.00	NA	\$3224	\$31.00	1%
5	\$1	\$54.00	NA	\$3797	\$38.00	1%

a) What is the effective date of the sliding fee scale(s)? [June 1, 2016](#)

b) Provide the link to the sliding fee scale cnmiccdf.org

3.4.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated and to whom will it be applied? Check all that the Lead Agency has chosen to use.

- Fee as dollar amount and
 - Fee is per child with the same fee for each child
 - Fee is per child and discounted fee for two or more children
 - Fee is per child up to a maximum per family
 - No additional fee charged after certain number of children
 - Fee is per family
- Fee as percent of income and
 - Fee is per child with the same percentage applied for each child

- Fee is per child and discounted percentage applied for two or more children
- Fee is per child up to a maximum per family
- No additional percentage applied charged after certain number of children
- Fee is per family
- Contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

Describe:

- Other.

Describe:

3.4.3 Will the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's copayment? (658E(c)(3)(B))

- Yes, and describe those additional factors using the checkboxes below.
 - Number of hours the child is in care
 - Lower copayments for higher quality of care as defined by the State/Territory
 - Other.

Describe other factors.

- No.

3.4.4 The Lead Agency may waive contributions/co-payments from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size.

Will the Lead Agency waive family contributions/co-payments?

- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families with income at or below the poverty level for families of the same size.

The poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family size of 3 is \$ 2192.00

- No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments

3.4.5 How will the Lead Agency ensure the family contribution/co-payment, based on a sliding fee scale, is affordable?

Check all that apply:

Limits the maximum co-payment per family.

Describe:

co payment is minimal, per family and is maximum for the family size.

Limits combined amount of copayment for all children to a percentage of family income. List the percentage of the copayment limit.

Describe:

Minimizes the abrupt termination of assistance before a family can afford the full cost of care ("the cliff effect") as part of the graduated phase-out of assistance discussed in 3.1.5.

Describe:

Does not allow providers to charge families the difference between the maximum payment rate (addressed in section 4) and their private pay rate in addition to the copayment they are paying.

Describe:

Covers all fees (such as registration, supplies, field trips) to minimize the additional fees charged to the families by the provider.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

4 Ensure Equal Access to High Quality Child Care for Low-Income Children

The 2014 reauthorization of the CCDBG Act is designed to help States and Territories advance improvements to the quality of child care in order to promote the healthy social-emotional, cognitive and physical development of participating children. Ensuring that low-income and vulnerable children can access high-quality care (and remain enrolled to school entry and beyond) is an equally important purpose of CCDBG. Payment levels and policies have a major impact on access.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 revises the requirement for a market rate survey (MRS) so that: 1) it must be statistically valid and reliable; and (2) it must reflect variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child. Also, a State/Territory may develop and conduct an alternative methodology for setting payment rates, such as a cost estimation model, to take into account the cost of meeting quality requirements.

To provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to participate in the subsidy program, the State/Territory's payment practices for CCDF child care providers must reflect generally accepted payment practices of non-CCDF child care providers in the State/Territory, such as paying for supplies, field trips, registration fees. In addition, to the extent practicable, the State/Territory must implement enrollment and eligibility policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absence due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness or closures due to emergency.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that the State/Territory must also develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for: (1) children in underserved areas; (2) infants and toddlers; (3) children with disabilities (the CCDBG Act of 2014 added a new definition of child with disability (658(P)(3)); and (4) children who receive care during non-traditional hours. With respect to investments to increase access to programs providing high-quality child care and development services, the State/Territory must give priority to children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such programs. (658 E(c)(2)(M))

[4.1 Parental Choice In Relation to Certificates, Grants or Contracts](#)

The parent(s) of each eligible child who receive(s) or is offered financial assistance for child care services has the option of either enrolling such child with a provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of service or receiving a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)) This did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014.

4.1.1 Describe how the parent of each eligible child is advised that the Lead Agency offers the option of selecting a provider that has a grant or contract or receiving a child care certificate (658E(c)(2)(A)(i), 658P(2))

- During pre-eligibility activities as well as mandatory orientations parents are provided the listing of range of options of providers. Currently, parents are able to choose among the following types of child care providers: Child Care Centers, group child care homes, license exempt care providers, and relative care providers.

4.1.2 Describe how the parent is informed of the option to choose from a variety of child care categories - such as private, not-for-profit, faith-based providers (if using a certificate), centers, family child care homes, or in-home providers (658E(c)(2)(A)(i), 658P(2), 658Q))

- Certificate form provides information about the choice of providers, including high quality providers
- Certificate is not linked to a specific provider so parents can choose provider of choice
- Consumer education materials on choosing child care
- Referral to child care resource and referral agencies
- Co-located resource and referral in eligibility offices
- Verbal communication at the time of application
- Community outreach, workshops or other in-person activities
- Other.

Describe

All eligible parents go through a mandatory orientation. Mandatory orientations are facilitated by Eligibility Specialists (ES). During mandatory orientations, parents are provided with a resource packet that includes all child care resources available in the community, including range of options of providers. Parents are provided the opportunity to make changes to their providers when needed throughout their eligibility period.

The CNMI does not have a Resource and Referral Office. The CCDF Office not only provides parents information regarding the subsidy program but any and all information regarding providers. ES are trained to assist parents with questions regarding choices of

providers (Licensed Center based or Licensed-exempt providers).

4.1.3 Child Care Services Available through Grants or Contracts

a) In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency provide child care services through grants or contracts for child care slots? (658A(b)(1) **Note:** Do not check "yes" if every provider is simply required to sign an agreement in order to be paid in the certificate program.

Yes. If yes, **describe**

the type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts

the entities who receive contracts (e.g., shared services alliances, child care resource and referral agencies, family child care networks, community based agencies, child care providers, etc.)

the process for accessing grants or contracts

the range of providers available through grants or contracts

how rates for contracted slots are set for grants and contracts

how the State/Territory determines which entities to contract with for increasing supply and/or improving quality

if contracts are offered statewide and/or locally:

No. If no, skip to 4.1.4.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to achieve any of the following (check all that apply):

Increase the supply of specific types of care with grants or contracts
for:

Programs to serve children with disabilities

Programs to serve infants and toddlers

- Programs to serve school-age children
- Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
- Programs to serve homeless children
- Programs to serve children in underserved areas
- Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
- Programs that serve specific geographic areas
 - Urban
 - Rural
- Other.

Describe:

- Improve the quality of child care programs with grants or contracts for:
 - Programs providing comprehensive services, such as integrated child care in Head Start, Early Head Start, summer or other programs
 - Programs meeting higher quality standards, such as higher rated QRIS programs, accreditation or state pre-k programs that meet higher quality standards
 - Programs that provide financial incentives to teaching staff linked to higher education and qualifications link increased education requirements to higher compensation
 - Programs to serve children with disabilities or special needs
 - Programs to serve infants and toddlers
 - Programs to serve school-age children
 - Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
 - Programs to serve homeless children
 - Programs to serve children in underserved areas
 - Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
 - Programs that serve specific geographic areas
 - Urban
 - Rural
 - Other.

Describe:

4.1.4 The Lead Agency certifies policies and procedures are in place that afford parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds.

(658E(c)(2)(B)) This requirement did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014. Describe the policies and procedures for unlimited access

Describe the policies and procedures for unlimited access

The Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) includes requirement that all licensed programs must have a policy that describes parent unlimited access to children whenever their children are in the care of a provider (Section 55-40.1-150 Parent Accessibility) CCDF Rules and Regulations (Section 55-60-201 (d)(1)(ii) requires ALL CCDF providers to have a description in their policy manuals of parent unlimited access to their children when their child is with the child care provider. CCDF Providers also acknowledges in their application form that they must afford parents unlimited access when their program is open.

Providers are required to submit a copy of their policy manuals to CCDF Office as part of provider application packet.

4.1.5 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care (i.e., care provided in the child's own home) but may limit its use. Will the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

Yes. If checked, what limits will the Lead Agency set on the use of in-home care? Check all that apply.

Restricted based on minimum number of children in the care of the provider to meet minimum wage law or Fair Labor Standards Act

Describe:

The in-home provider must meet the minimum wage law in order to provide care in the

home of the child. Currently, maximum number of children at a home is 4.

Restricted based on provider meeting a minimum age requirement

Describe:

the provider must be at least 18 years old to care in the home of the child.

Restricted based on hours of care (certain number of hours, non-traditional work hours)

Describe:

children who may need care during non-traditional work hours such as after 5pm to 7am

Restricted to care by relatives

Describe:

In home providers may only provide care to children related to them.

Restricted to care for children with special needs or medical condition

Describe:

Restricted to in-home providers that meet some basic health and safety requirements

Describe:

home must meet the minimum health and safety requirements as identified by the CCDF program

Other

Describe:

Must meet minimum medical/physical requirement to care for the young child.

No.

4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs

The new law revises the requirement for a market rate survey (MRS) so that: (1) it must be statistically valid and reliable; and (2) it must reflect variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child (658E(c)(4)(B)). A State/Territory has the option to develop and use a statistically valid and reliable alternative methodology for setting payment rates, such as a cost estimation model. Any payment rates established using an alternative methodology or market rate survey must be reviewed and approved by ACF as part of the CCDF Plan review process. Because the alternative methodology is a new basis for

setting payment rates, we highly recommend any State or Territory considering an alternative methodology to submit a description of its proposed approach to the ACF Regional Office in advance of the Plan submittal in order to avoid delays with Plan approval. (see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-reauthorization-faq>).

The MRS or alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than two years before the date of submission of the Plan (instead of two years before the effective date of the Plan, as previously required for the MRS).

The State must consult with the State Advisory Council, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology.

The State must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or alternative methodology. The State must make the report with these results widely available no later than 30 days after completion of the MRS or alternative methodology, including by posting the results on the Internet.

The State must set CCDF subsidy payment rates in accordance with the results of the current MRS or alternative methodology. When setting payment rates, the State must take into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided prior to November 2014 (e.g., tiered reimbursement or other methods) and without, **to the extent practicable**, reducing the number of families receiving CCDF relative to the number served as of November 2014. In taking the cost of providing quality into consideration, it is important to consider such key factors as what it takes to support increased stability and reduced provider turnover when setting payment rates.

4.2.1 Developing and Conducting a Market Rate Survey (MRS) and/or an Alternative Methodology. Did the State/Territory conduct a statistically and valid and reliable MRS, alternative methodology or both between July 1, 2013 and March 1, 2016?

MRS

Alternative Methodology.

Describe:

Both.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

4.2.2 Describe how the State consulted with the State Advisory Council (SAC) or other state- or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities which could include worker organizations prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology.

Describe:

CCDF Provided a copy of the MRS instrument as well as the result of the MRS to partner agencies during a meeting. Questions were addressed regarding the market rate survey. The rate is made available at the CCDF website.

4.2.3 Describe how the market rate survey or alternative methodology is statistically valid and reliable.

To be considered valid and reliable, the MRS or alternative methodology must represent the child care market, provide complete and current data, use rigorous data collection procedures, reflect geographic variation, and analyze data in a manner that captures other relevant differences. For example, market rate surveys can use administrative data such as child care resource and referral data if they are representative of the market. If an alternative methodology such as cost modeling is used, demonstrate that the methodology used reliable models that estimated the cost of delivering services in center- and home-based settings at each level of quality defined by the State/Territory.

Describe:

The MRS was sent and provided to all child care providers found in the CNMI. The information gathered in the MRS included: business/general information, capacity, hours of care for different ages of children (part time and full time; infant/toddler, preschool, afterschool), other charges imposed by providers such as books, registration fees, fieldtrip fees, etc., and additional comments were also requested.

4.2.4 Describe how the market rate survey reflects variations in the price of child care services by:

a) Geographic area (e.g., statewide or local markets):

The CNMI is a very small community. Rates were very similar to each other. The MRS was provided to all providers located in the islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

b) Type of provider:

Although all types of programs were provided the MRS, only the licensed programs submitted back their survey. There are currently 24 total licensed providers in the CNMI.

c) Age of child:

Infants, Toddler, Preschool, and School Age Children

d) Describe any other key variations examined by the market rate survey, such as quality level

Currently the CNMI does not have quality levels as part of the variation.

4.2.5 Describe the process used by the State to make the results of the market rate survey widely available to the public.

a) Date of completion of the market rate survey or alternative methodology (must be no earlier than July 1, 2013 and no later than March 1, 2016)

03/01/2015

b) Date report containing results were made widely available, no less than 30 days after the completion of the report 04/01/2015

c) How the report containing results was made widely available and provide the link where the report is posted if available

Shared during a meeting with CCDF partners. This is made available in the CNMICCDF.org website.

4.3 Setting Payment Rates

4.3.1 Provide the base payment rates and percentiles (based on current MRS or alternative methodology) for the following categories. The ages and types of care listed below are meant to provide a snapshot of categories on which rates may be based and are not intended to be comprehensive of all categories that may exist in your State/Territory or reflective of the terms that your State/Territory may use for particular ages. Please use the most populous geographic region (serving highest number of children).

Note - If the payment rates are not set by the State/Territory, check here

Describe how many jurisdictions set their own payment rates

The rates are implemented throughout the CNMI.

a) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

b) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed FCC care in most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

c) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

d) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed FCC care in most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

e) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

f) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 400.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 68%

g) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 180.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 58%

h) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

region

Rate \$ 180.00 per month unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 58%

i) Describe the calculation/definition of full-time care:

For infants/toddlers (6 weeks to 3 years -through 3 years): full time care is up to 180 hours monthly

For Preschool(4 years to 5 years old-through 5 years) : full time care is up to 180 hours monthly

For Afterschool school age care (6 years old to 12 years-through 12 years): full time care is up to 60 hours monthly

For Afterschool school age care during Summer/long breaks/holidays: full time care is up to 180 hours monthly

j) Provide the effective date of the payment rates : June 1, 2016

k) Provide the link to the payment rates : cnmiccdf.org

4.3.2 States and Territories may choose to set base payment rates that differ because they take into consideration such factors as 1) geographic location, 2) age of child, 3) needs of children (special needs, protective services, etc.), 4) non-traditional hours of care, or 5) quality of care.

In other words, base rates for infants may be set at a higher level than for school-age care because the cost of providing infant care tends to be higher than school-age care. In addition to these rates that differ tied to market variations in prices, States and Territories can choose to establish tiered rates or add-ons on top of these variable base rates as a way to increase payment rates for targeted needs (i.e., higher rate for special needs children as both an incentive for providers to serve children with special needs and as a way to cover the higher costs to the provider to provide care for special needs children).

Check which types of tiered payment or rate add-on, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement. In the description of any tiered rates or add-ons, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates, amount or percentage of the tiered rate/add-on, and indicate if the rates were set based on the MRS or another process.

Tiered rate/rate add-on for non-traditional hours.

Describe:

- Tiered rate/rate add-on for children with special needs as defined by the State/Territory.

Describe:

- Tiered rate/rate add-on for infants and toddlers (do not check if you have a different base rate for infants/toddlers with no separate bonus or add-on).

Describe:

- Tiered rate/rate add-on for programs meeting higher quality as defined by the State/Territory.

Describe:

- Tiered rate/rate add-on for programs serving homeless children.

Describe:

- Other tiered rate/rate add-on beyond the base rate.

Describe:

- None.

4.3.3 Describe how the State/Territory set payment rates for child care services in accordance with the results of the most recent market rate survey or alternative methodology

Describe:

Due to limited funding and in order to maintain as many children as possible without compromising accessibility of CCDF eligible families with providers, CCDF will set the Market Rate higher than 55th percentile. Although the rate is set below the 75th percentile, the current rates still showed increased rates from previous rates.

Last year, the rates were::

Infant and Toddler Monthly Rate: \$350.00 Effective June 1, 2016 \$400.00

Preschool Monthly Rate: \$350.00 Effective June 1, 2016 \$400.00

Afterschool School Age Monthly Rate: \$75.00 Effective June 1, 2016 \$80.00

Summer Program for School Age Children Monthly rate: \$350.00 Effective June 1, 2016 \$400.00

Although the rates are lower than the 75th percentile, the new rates which will become effective in June 1, 2016 shows an increase reimbursement rates.

4.3.4 In setting payment rates, how did the State/Territory take into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided prior to November 2014 (e.g., tiered payment or other methods) and without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families receiving CCDF relative to the number of families served as of November 2014.

For example, providing tiered payment with a sufficient differential to support higher quality, considering the cost of quality using a cost estimation model or other method, or examining the participation rate of high-quality providers in the subsidy system (e.g., using indicators from a quality rating system, accreditation or other state-defined indicators of quality) and adjusting payment rates if necessary.

Describe:

Tiered reimbursement is tied to the Quality Rating and Improvement System currently being piloted. This will take into account higher quality of care being provided to families and children. The QRIS will also include opportunities for grants to the programs to improve identified areas as well as financial incentives to staff.

Although the rates that will be implemented effective June 1, 2016 is lower than the 75th percentile, there is an increase in reimbursement rates compared to rates offered from last year.

4.4 Summary of Facts Used to Determine that Payments Rates Are Sufficient to Ensure Equal Access

The CCDF plan shall provide a summary of data and facts relied on by the State/Territory to certify that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access. (658E (c)(4)(A)) Equal access is not limited to a single percentile alone but is inclusive of various metrics or benchmarks that would offer children receiving CCDF access to the same services (type of care, quality of care) as children not receiving CCDF.

4.4.1 What data and facts did the State use to determine equal access (i.e., what is your metric or benchmark of equal access - such as percentile that rates cover or proportion of costs covered)? Check all that apply and describe.

- Payment rates are set at the 75th percentile or higher of the most recent survey.

Describe:

- Using tiered rates/differential rates as described in 4.3.3 to increase access for targeted needs.

- Rates based on data on the cost to the provider of providing care meeting certain standards

Describe:

- Data on the size of the difference (in terms of dollars) between payment rates and the 75th percentile in the most recent survey, if rates are below the 75th percentile.

Describe:

- Data on the proportion of children receiving subsidy being served by high-quality providers.

Describe:

- Data on where children are being served showing access to the full range of providers. .

Describe:

All children subsidized by CCDF have access to a full range of providers; for profit, non-profit programs, small capacity, and large capacity programs.

- Data on how rates set below the 75th percentile allow CCDF families access to the same quality of care as families not receiving CCDF.

Describe:

CCDF families are still able to access the same quality of care as other families since

providers have expressed they will accept CCDF eligible families. The rates offered by CCDF will be considered "discount" to the family.

- Feedback from parents, including parent survey or parent complaints.

Describe:

CCDF eligible families are happy with their providers as shared with CCDF Office. CCDF eligible families also have expressed they did not have a difficult time finding a provider with the current reimbursement rates.

- Other.

Describe:

Due to limited funding, if CCDF pays immediately at the 75th percentile, this will greatly lessen the number of children being served by the program.

4.4.2 Does the State/Territory certify that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access either based on the current MRS or alternative methodology?

Does the State/Territory certify that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access either based on the current MRS or alternative methodology?

- Yes. The State/Territory certifies that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access by March 1, 2016.

Provide the State/Territory definition of how its payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access

- No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [06/1//2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Not yet started](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access either based on the current MRS or alternative methodology](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[March 1, 2016 Finalize Updated Payment Rates](#)

[April to May 30, 2016 Meeting and Training of Eligibility Staff on the new payment rates and calculations](#)

[June 1, 2016 Effective date for updated payment rates](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [03/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [05/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [CCDF Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[None](#)

[4.5 Payment Practices and Timeliness of Payments](#)

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that requires States and Territories to describe in the Plan how the State/Territory's payment practices for CCDF child care providers reflect generally accepted payment practices of non-CCDF child care providers in the State/Territory - so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to participate in the subsidy program. To the extent practicable, the State/Territory must implement enrollment and eligibility policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness. (658E(c)(2)(S))

[4.5.1 Describe the status of State/Territory's payment practices for CCDF child care providers that reflect generally accepted payment practices of non-CCDF child care providers in the State/Territory](#)

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above by March 1, 2016. Describe using 4.5.2 through 4.5.3 below.
- Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

4.5.2 Describe how the payment practices to child care providers who serve CCDF-assisted children reflect generally accepted payment practices of other child care providers in the State/Territory to ensure stability of funding to encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive CCDF assistance. Check all that apply and describe.

The Lead Agency

- Pays prospectively prior to the delivery of services.

Describe:

- Pays within no more than 21 days of billing for services.

Describe:

- Supports fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by paying based on enrollment instead of attendance.

Describe including the State/Territory's definition of occasional absences

- Supports fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by providing full payment if a child attends at least a certain percent of authorized time. Specify percent and describe

Specify percent and describe

- Supports fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by providing full payment if a child is absent for a certain number of days in a month.

Specify the number of absence days allowed and paid for and describe

Providers are paid for a child's absence up to a maximum of 3 days with or without notice. Providers are also paid 1 day for any trainings or TA's scheduled during regular work day.

- Pays on a full-time or part-time basis (rather than smaller increments such as hourly)

Describe:

The CCDF Program will pay on a full time or part time basis regardless of child's attendance.

- Pays for standard and customary fees that the provider charges private-paying parents (e.g., registration fees, deposits, supplies, field trips, etc.)

Describe:

- Provides prompt notice to providers regarding any changes to the family's eligibility status that may impact payment

Describe:

Eligibility Specialists (ES) are in constant communication with providers. Should there be changes that will affect the family's payments, the ES will communicate with the providers immediately through email and/or phone calls.

- Has a timely appeal and resolution process for payment inaccuracies and disputes.

Describe:

Should there be inaccuracies and disputes, the process usually takes less than 30 days such that any adjustment is made following month.

- Other.

Describe:

Child's services will be based on paren'ts eligibility of whether full time or part time.

- For those options not checked above, explain why these options are not generally accepted payment practices in your State/Territory.

The process of paying providers entails the assistance of the Department of Finance who must have the necessary documents (such as payment invoices) in order to approve the release of funds/payments to providers, dependent on drawdown of federal funds schedule, government payroll schedule.

4.5.3 Check and describe the strategies the State/Territory will use to ensure the timeliness of payments.

- Policy on length of time for making payments.

Describe length of time:

Processing of invoice from CCDF Office will take 10 working days and is forwarded to CNMI Department of Finance.

- Track and monitor the payment process

Describe:

- Use of electronic tools (e.g., automated billing, direct deposit, etc.)

Describe:

- Other.

Describe:

4.6 Supply Building Strategies to Meet the Needs of Certain Populations

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that the State/Territory will develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for children in underserved areas, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children who receive care during non-traditional hours. (658 E(c)(2)(M))

4.6.1 Has the State/Territory conducted data analysis of existing and growing supply needs?

Yes.

Describe data sources

No.

If no, how does the State/Territory determine most critical supply needs?

CCDF is provided information on needs assessment as requested by other partners.

Outreach activities also provide information regarding supply needs.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and improve quality for:

a) Infants and toddlers (check all that apply)

Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3)

Family child care networks

Start-up funding

Technical assistance support

Recruitment of providers

Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.4.1)

Other.

Describe

Support in terms of educational materials specifically for infants and toddlers

b) Children with disabilities (check all that apply)

- Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3)
- Family child care networks
- Start-up funding
- Technical assistance support
- Recruitment of providers
- Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.4.1)
- Other.

Describe

c) Children who receive care during non-traditional hours (check all that apply)

- Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3)
- Family child care networks
- Start-up funding
- Technical assistance support
- Recruitment of providers
- Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.4.1)
- Other.

Describe

d) Homeless children (check all that apply)

- Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3)
- Family child care networks
- Start-up funding
- Technical assistance support
- Recruitment of providers
- Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.4.1)
- Other.

Describe

4.6.3 The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States to describe the procedures and process it uses, in terms of the investments made to increase access to programs providing high quality child care and development services, to give priority for those investments to children in families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such high-quality programs. (658E(c)(2)(Q))

Describe the status of State/Territory's process and procedures to give priority for investments to children and families from areas with high concentrations of poverty and unemployment that do not have high-quality programs.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above.

Describe

Although limited in funding, the CCDF program is able to serve all families who may apply when the program is open throughout the CNMI. The CCDF Office promote high quality care to all families and each of the island communities. CCDF continually provides on-going training and technical assistance opportunities to all providers including those who may not be receiving CCDF funds. Resources are also available to providers on such things as developmentally appropriate educational materials, books, and literature.

CCDF program also provide small grants when funds are available for providers to address identified needs.

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's status toward complete implementation for any requirement(s) not fully implemented (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

5 Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings

The CCDBG Act of 2014 makes child care safer by defining minimum health and safety requirements for child care providers. This includes both the standards that must be established and the pre-service/orientation and ongoing minimum training required. States and Territories must also explain why exemptions to any of the licensing standards do not endanger the health and safety of CCDF children in license-exempt care. States and Territories are required to have standards for CCDF providers regarding group size limits and appropriate child-to-provider ratios based on the age of children in child care.

Pre-licensure and annual unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers and annual inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers are now required. The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States and Territories to establish qualifications and training for licensing inspectors and appropriate inspector-to-provider ratios. It also requires States and Territories to conduct criminal background checks for all child care staff members, including staff members who don't care directly for children but have unsupervised access to children and lists specific disqualifying crimes. States and Territories must certify that all child care providers comply with child abuse reporting requirements of Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), mandatory reporting of known and suspected instances of child abuse and neglect).

5.1 Licensing Requirements and Standards

Each State is required to certify it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services provided within the State (not restricted to providers receiving CCDF), and to provide a detailed description of such requirements and how such requirements are effectively enforced. (658E(c)(2)(l)(i))

5.1.1 The State/Territory certifies that it has licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the State.

(658(c)(2)(F)) This requirement did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014. List the categories of care that your State/Territory licenses and provide your definition of each licensed category of care

List the categories of care that your State/Territory licenses and provide your definition of each licensed category of care

Center based child care providers: authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours in non-residential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent's work; group home child care provider is defined as two or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent's work;

family child care provider is defined as one individual who provides child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child; as the sole caregiver in a private residence other than the child's residence unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the parent's nature of work; In home provider defined as in individual who provides care in the child's own home.

5.1.2 Does your State/Territory exempt any child care providers from its licensing requirements?

Yes.

Describe which types of providers that can receive CCDF are exempt from licensing and how such exemptions do not endanger children who receive CCDF services from

license-exempt providers

Individuals caring for 4 children or less are considered licensed-exempt providers.

Although exempted from licensing, CCDF Program requires these providers to submit a complete application as well as documents such as: Police Clearance, SORNA

Clearance, Health Clearance, and subjected to annual inspections as well as at least 2 monitoring visits per year.

No.

5.1.3 Describe the status of the State/Territory's development and implementation of child care standards for providers receiving CCDF that address appropriate ratios between the number of children and the number of providers and group size, in terms of the age of the children for each type of setting. (658E(c)(2)(H))

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. Describe using 5.1.4 and 5.1.5 below.

Not implemented. If not implemented, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

5.1.4 Describe how the State/Territory child care standards for providers receiving CCDF address appropriate ratios between the number of children and the number of providers and group size, in terms of the age of the children for each type of setting. (658E(c)(2)(H))

a) Licensed Center-Based Care

1. Infant

- State/Territory age definition:

Children who are newborn up to age one (1) through the twelve (12) month

- Ratio:

1:3, 1:4

- Group Size:

For ratio of 1:3, the group size will be at 6

For ratio of 1:4, the group size will be at 8

2. Toddler

- State/Territory age definition:

Children from twelve (12) to thirty six (36) months

- Ratio:

1:3, 1:4, 1:5, 1:6

- Group Size:

For ratio of 1:3, the group size will be at 6

For ratio of 1:4, the group size will be at 8

For ratio of 1:5, the group size will be at 10

For ratio of 1:6, the group size will be at 12

3. Preschool:

- State/Territory age definition:

Children from 4 years to 5 years old

- Ratio:

1:10

- Group Size:

For the ratio of 1:10, the group size will be at 20

4. School-Age

- State/Territory age definition:

Chronological age of children enrolled in Elementary and Junior High School below the age of 13

- Ratio:

1:25

- Group Size:

The maximum group size for this age group is 25

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe:

Exempt child care centers are those centers being operated by the Public School Systems, these will include the Head Start Programs.

6. Describe, if applicable, ratios and group sizes for centers with mixed age groups. For those with mixed age groups, for purposes of mixed age grouping the age of the youngest child will be followed. For example in a mixed age group of 1 infant, 3 preschool, the ratio will be 1:4 and follows the maximum group size of the infant.

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes:

1. Infant

- State/Territory age definition:

New born up to the 12th month

- Ratio:

1:4

- Group Size:

For the ratio of 1:4, the maximum group size is 8

2. Toddler

- State/Territory age definition:

Twelve to thirty six months

- Ratio:

1:3, 1:4, 1:5, 1:6

- Group Size:

For ratio of 1:3, the group size will be at 6

For ratio of 1:4, the group size will be at 8

For ratio of 1:5, the group size will be at 10

For ratio of 1:6, the group size will be at 12

3. Preschool:

- State/Territory age definition:

4 years to 5 years old

- Ratio:

1:10

- Group Size:

The maximum group size for this age group is 10

4. School-Age

- State/Territory age definition:

Chronological age of children enrolled in Elementary and Junior High School below the age of 13

- Ratio:

1:12

- Group Size:

The maximum group size for this age group is 12

5. Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time, if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the child-to-provider ratio or group size, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day

12

6. If any of the responses above are different for exempt group child care homes, describe

The CNMI does not have exempt group child care homes.

N/A. State/Territory does not have group child care homes.

c) Licensed Family Child Care:

1. Describe the ratios, group size, the threshold for when licensing is required, maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time, if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day.

Describe the ratios:

1:6

Describe the group size:

The group size for the ratio 1:6 is 6

Describe the threshold for when licensing is required:

4

Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time:

6

Describe if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size:

No

Describe the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day:

no more than two (2) children under twenty four months of age

2. If any of the responses above are different for exempt family child care home providers, describe

Exempt family home care providers may only care for a maximum of 4 children.

d) Any other eligible CCDF provider categories:

Describe the ratios, group size, the threshold for when licensing is required, maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time, if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day.

Describe the ratios:

None

Describe group size:

None

Describe the threshold for when licensing is required:

None

Describe maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time:

None

Describe if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size:

None

Describe the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day:

None

5.1.5 Describe how the State/Territory child care standards address required qualifications for providers appropriate to each type of setting, including the minimum age allowed, minimum education level, any specific content required related to the age of children. (658E(c)(2)(H))

a) Licensed Center-Based Care:

1. Infant lead teacher

Infant lead teacher or caregiver at least 18 years old, BA Degree or related field such as maternal-child health, nursing, or human development at least 12 month of full time experience working children under the age of 36 months.

and assistant teacher qualifications:

Assistant teacher qualifications at least 18 years old, with a high school diploma or its equivalent and 12 months full time experience with children under the age of 36 months

2. Toddler lead teacher

Toddler lead teacher or caregiver at least 18 years old, BA Degree or related field such as maternal-child health, nursing, or human development at least 12 month of full time experience working children under the age of 36 months

and assistant teacher qualifications:

Assistant teacher qualifications at least 18 years old, with a high school diploma or its equivalent and 12 months full time experience with children under the age of 36 month

3. Preschool lead teacher

Preschool lead teacher at least 18 years old, a degree in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college or university and 6 months working experience

and assistant teacher qualifications:

Assistant teacher qualifications at least 18 years old, with a post secondary credential in child development, associate program or associate arts degree and certificate in ECE and six months experience

4. School-Age lead teacher

School-Age lead teacher at least 18 years old a degree in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college or university and 6 months working experience

and assistant teacher qualifications:

Assistant teacher qualifications at least 18 years old, with a post secondary credential in child development, associate program or associate arts degree and certificate in ECE and six months experience

5. Director qualifications:

Director's qualifications at least 18 years old, bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university preferably with courses in ECE, education, child development or related fields and two years experience

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes:

1. Infant lead teacher

Infant lead teacher or caregiver at least 18 years old, BA Degree or related field such as maternal-child health, nursing, or human development at least 12 month of full time experience working children under the age of 36 months

and assistant qualifications:

Assistant qualifications at least 18 years old, with a high school diploma or its equivalent and 12 months full time experience with children under the age of 36 months.

2. Toddler lead teacher

Toddler lead teacher or caregiver at least 18 years old, BA Degree or related field such as maternal-child health, nursing, or human development at least 12 month of full time experience working children under the age of 36 months

and assistant qualifications:

Assistant qualifications at least 18 years old, with a high school diploma or its equivalent and 12 months full time experience with children under the age of 36 months

3. Preschool lead teacher

Preschool lead teacher at least 18 years old, a degree in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college or university and 6 months working experience

and assistant qualifications:

Assistant qualifications at least 18 years old, with a post secondary credential in child development, associate program or associate arts degree and certificate in ECE and six

months experience

4. School-Age lead teacher

School-Age lead teacher at least 18 years old, a degree in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college or university and 6 months working experience

and assistant qualifications:

Assistant qualifications at least 18 years old, with a post secondary credential in child development, associate program or associate arts degree and certificate in ECE and six months experience

N/A. State/Territory does not have group child care homes.

c) Licensed Family Child Care home provider qualifications

Licensed Family Child Care home provider qualifications at least 18 years old, at least 2 written references from a friend, person in professional capacity, a parent of a child previously under the care of the provider

d) Other eligible providers qualifications:

None

5.1.6 The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a new provision specifying that States and Territories must 1) establish health and safety requirements for providers serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to matters included in the topics listed below, and 2) have pre-service or orientation training requirements, appropriate to the provider setting, that address these health and safety topics.

(658E(c)(2)(l)(i)) This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving CCDF regardless of licensing status (licensed or license-exempt). The only exception to this requirement is for providers who are caring for their own relatives, as States have the option of exempting relatives from some or all CCDF health and safety requirements. When establishing these requirements, States are encouraged to consider the age of children and type of child care setting to ensure that they are appropriate to the health and safety needs of the children from birth through age 12 and the providers who care for them.

a) The State certifies that it has health and safety requirements for individuals (providers) receiving CCDF in the following areas:

- Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)
- Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices
- Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent
- Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
- Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
- Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma
- Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a) (1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1))
- Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants
- Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)
- First aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Yes. The State/Territory certifies that it has health and safety requirements for CCDF providers in these areas as of March 1, 2016.

Provide a citation and a link if available

No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Substantially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

- Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization) (Addressed in Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) regulation Section 55-40.1-232)
- Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices (Addressed in CCDF Regulations Section 55-60-201 (E)(V))
- Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental

- consent (Addressed CCLP Regulations in Section 55-40.1-238)
- Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions (Addressed in CCLP Regulations in Section 55-40.1-244)
- Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic (Addressed in CCLP Regulations Section 55-40.1-115)
- Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (Not Addressed)
- Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a) (1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1)) (Not Addressed)
- Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants (Not Addressed)
- Precautions in transporting children (if applicable) (Addressed in CCLP Regulations Section 55-40.1-216)
- First aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification (Addressed in CCLP Regulations Section 55-40.1-236)

b) The State/Territory certifies that it has pre-service (prior to initial service) or orientation (period from when service started) and ongoing training requirements, appropriate to the provider setting that address each of the requirements relating to the topic areas listed above. ACF expects these trainings will be part of a broader systematic approach and progression of professional development (as described in Section 6) within a State/Territory that will result in opportunities for child care providers to accumulate knowledge, competencies and credits toward eventual completion of a professional certification or higher education. The law does not specify a specific number of training or education hours but States and Territories are encouraged to consult with *Caring for our Children Basics* for best practices and recommended time needed to address these training requirements.

- Yes. The State/Territory certifies that it has pre-service or orientation and ongoing training requirements appropriate to the provider setting that address each of the requirements relating to the topics listed above as of March 1, 2016.

Describe, including at a minimum 1) how the state/territory defines preservice or orientation period, 2) the minimum number of annual preservice or orientation hours required to meet these health, and safety requirements, and 3) ongoing training or education hours required to meet these health and safety requirements

- No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Partially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[The CCLP Program has in place the following requirements: prevention and control of infectious diseases \(immunization\) Section 55-40.1-232; Building and physical premises safety, Section 55-40.1-115; Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants Precautions in transporting children Section 55-040.1-216; First Aid and CPR certification Section 55-40.1-236; Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions Section 40.1-244;](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [pre-service \(prior to initial service\) or orientation \(period from when service started\) appropriate to the provider setting that address each of the requirements relating to the required topic areas](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Amend the Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) program rules and regulations to include definition of pre-service hours\(10 hours\) and orientation period \(6 months\) and increase annual trainings to include 40 hours with technical](#)

assistance hours.

Pre-service training hours will include these specific topics: Prevention of SIDS and use of safe sleeping practices, (total of 1.5 hours), Administration of Medication (1.0 hours), Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions (1.0 hours), Building and physical premises (1.0 hours), Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (1.5 hours), Emergency Preparedness and response planning for emergencies (2.0 hours), handling and storage of hazardous materials and appropriate disposal of biocontaminants (1.0 hours) and precautions in transporting children (1.0 hours). Total of preservice hours will be at 10 hours.

Annual training hours under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program will be increased to 30 hours with specific technical assistance hours focusing on needs identified through the QRIS.

All providers and caregivers under the CCDF Program will meet on going (annual) professional development hours (total of 30 hours) to include at least 1 training hour on the CCDF Program Rules and Regulations for Providers, and 29 hours focusing on identified needs through the QRIS assessments. Not less than 10 hours will be focused on technical assistance hours.

By end of May a draft of the amendments of CCDF Rules and Regulations incorporating these changes will be prepared as the document is being reviewed and going through public comments, CCDF will begin communicating with NMC or another organization regarding these pre-service trainings; policies and procedures drafted regarding these pre-service hours and topics

By end of June, Final draft of the amendments will be completed; reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and translated

By end of July, public comments will have been completed

By end of August Final Ruling and begin trainings of providers on the new requirements

By end of September, all providers will have been provided trainings on the new

requirements; policies and procedures on pre-service hours will be in place

Projected start date for each activity: 01/15/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[DCCA Child Care Licensing Program](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [pre-service \(prior to initial service\) or orientation \(period from when service started\)](#) appropriate to the provider setting that address each of the requirements relating to the required topic areas

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Amend the Child Care Licensing Program administrative code to include areas not included](#)

Projected start date for each activity: 01/15/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [DCCA-Child Care Licensing Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[DCCA-Child Care and Development Fund](#)

5.1.7 Does the State/Territory have health and safety requirements for any of the following optional areas?

Nutrition (including age appropriate feeding).

Describe:

[Child Care Licensing Program \(CCLP\)](#) requires all licensed providers to address provisions specific to the health, nutrition, exercise and hygiene as well as daily

nutritional needs of children.

- Access to physical activity.

Describe:

CCLP requires providers to address physical development and daily opportunities for such activities as running, climbing, and other vigorous activities

- Screen time.

Describe:

No screen time for children under age of 2 years old.

- Caring for children with special needs.

Describe:

CCLP regulations has special provisions to address children with special needs.

- Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Describe:

CCLP regulations specifics on reporting child abuse

- Other subject areas determined by the State/Territory to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety.

Describe:

CCLP regulations has in place such requirements to address: parental accessibility, supervision of children, communications with parents, program materials and equipments, handwashing policy, provider health standards, accidental injury precautions, environmental hazards etc.

5.1.8 States and Territories have the option to exempt relatives (as defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from these CCDF health and safety requirements.

Does the State/Territory exempt relatives from the requirement to receive pre-service or orientation health and safety training on any or all of the listed topics?

- Yes, all relatives are exempt from all health and safety training requirements.

If the State/Territory exempts all relatives from the CCDF health and safety training requirements, describe how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

- Yes, some relatives are exempt from health and safety training requirements.
If the State/Territory exempts some relatives from the CCDF health and safety training requirements, describe which relatives are exempt from which requirements (all or some) and include how the State/Territory ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.
- No, relatives are not exempt from CCDF health and safety training requirements.

5.2 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices

5.2.1 The State/Territory certifies that the State/Territory shall have in effect policies and practices to ensure that providers for children receiving assistance and their facilities comply with applicable State or local licensing and health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(J))

- Yes.

The State/Territory certifies that it has policies and practices to ensure compliance with applicable licensing and health and safety requirements for providers receiving CCDF and their facilities as of March 1, 2016. List the policy citation

[Child Care Licensing Regulations part 100, Subpart A Section 55-40.1-101 applications, Section 55-40.1-110 Inspection and Issuance of Child Care Licenses, Section 55-40.1-115 Fire and Health Inspections](#)

- No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

5.2.2 The CCDBG Act of 2014 added the following provisions for enforcement of licensing which must be in effect no later than November 19, 2016 for all providers who serve children receiving CCDF (with the option to exempt relatives). While the law does not specify strategies to meet these requirements, States and Territories could consider implementing a differential monitoring approach as long as the full complement of licensing and CCDF health and safety standards was representative and the frequency was at least annually.

a) **Licensing Inspectors** - It will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State/Territory are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State's licensure requirements. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(I))

Yes.

The State/Territory certifies that as of March 1, 2016 it has policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State/Territory are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State's licensure requirements. List the policy citation and describe the qualifications, including at a minimum how inspector qualifications address training related to the language and

cultural diversity of the providers, and how qualifications address being appropriate to the age of children in care and type of provider setting:

- No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016) [09/30/2016](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Other](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State/Territory are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State's licensure requirements.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Update Job Description to address Licensing Inspector qualifications and training needs](#)

[Meet with Office of Personnel Management Monthly to discuss updating of Job Description for Licensing Inspectors](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [03/01//2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [CCDF Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

b) Inspections for Licensed CCDF Providers - It will require licensing inspectors to perform inspections, with not less than one prelicensure inspection, for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, of each such child care provider and facility in the State/Territory. It will require licensing inspectors to perform not less than annually, one unannounced inspection of licensed CCDF providers for compliance with all child care licensing standards, which shall include an inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards (inspectors may inspect for compliance with all 3 standards at the same time. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(II))

Yes.

The State/Territory certifies that as of March 1, 2016 it has policies and practices regarding inspections for licensed CCDF providers. List the policy citation and describe the inspection requirements including the frequency of announced and unannounced visits

Child Care Licensing Program addresses this requirement, specifically, Part 100 Subpart A Licensing Procedures Section 55-40.1-101 Application, Section 55-40.1-110 Inspection and Issuance of Child Care Licenses, Section 55-40.1-115 Fire and Health Inspections. Before day care center, group child care home, family child care homes and before and afterschool programs can operate, it must obtain a child care license certificate. Upon submission of a complete application packet, the CCLP staff will conduct a pre-inspection of the program to determine compliance or not. If the program complies, then it is provided a child care license. If the program does not meet some or most of the requirement, the applicant is advised of the result of the inspection and provided time to address deficiencies. A re-inspection is completed upon notice from provider that it has addressed the issues. At least 1 monitoring visit is completed for all licensed provider. CCDF Program Rules and Regulations also state that in Part 200 Eligibility Section 55-60-201 Eligibility Requirements for Child Care Services, (d)(vii) subject to DCCA Child Care Program Staff announced and unannounced visit. At least 2 monitoring visits will be conducted.

No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

c) Inspections for License-Exempt CCDF Providers (except those serving relatives) -

It will have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the lead agency) of child care providers and facilities to perform an annual monitoring visit of each license-exempt CCDF provider (unless the provider is described in section (658P(6)(B)). (658E(c)(2)(K)(ii)(IV))

Yes.

The State/Territory certifies that as of March 1, 2016 it has policies and practices regarding inspections for license-exempt CCDF providers. List the policy citation and describe the annual monitoring visit requirements:

The only license exempt providers in the CNMI are relative care providers. Although these are relative care providers, these providers are subjected to announced and unannounced visits by the CCDF Health and Safety Inspector and must provide documents such as SORNA Clearance, Health Clearance, Police Clearance, completion of annual training and technical assistance hours, etc. Section 55-60-201 (d) (2)(iv) Submits to an initial and annual inspections and approval (v) subject to DCCA Child Care Program Staff announced and unannounced visits.

No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

d) **Ratio of Licensing Inspectors**) - It will have policies and practices that require the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State/Territory to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal, State, and local law. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(III))

Yes.

The State/Territory certifies that it has policies and practices regarding the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State/Territory. List the policy citation and list the State/Territory ratio of licensing inspectors:

- No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Not yet started](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

[None](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State/Territory to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal, State, and local law.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Amend Child Care Licensing Program regulations to include ratio for licensing inspectors](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [01/15/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

[Department of Community and Cultural Affairs - Child Care Licensing Program](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[Department of Community and Cultural Affairs - Child Care and Development Fund](#)

e) **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting** - That child abuse reporting requirements are in place and comply with section of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)) (658E(c)(2)(L))

Yes.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s):

[CCLP Administrative Code, Section 55-40.1-130 addresses this requirement on Reporting Child Abuse](#)

No. If no, the State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

5.2.3 States and Territories have the option to exempt relatives (as defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from inspection requirements.

Note this exception only applies if the individual cares ONLY for relative children. Does the State/Territory exempt relatives from inspection requirements listed in 5.2.2?

Yes, all relatives are exempt from all inspection requirements.

If the State/Territory exempts all relatives from the inspection requirements, describe how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

Yes, some relatives are exempt from inspection requirements.

If the State/Territory exempts some relatives from the inspection requirements, describe which relatives are exempt from which requirements (all or some) and include how the State/Territory ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

No, relatives are not exempt from inspection requirements.

5.3 Criminal Background Checks

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added new requirements for States and Territories receiving CCDF funds to conduct criminal background checks on child care staff members and prospective staff members of child care providers. States and Territories must have requirements, policies, and procedures in place to conduct criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers (other than relatives) that are licensed, regulated or registered under State/Territory law or receive CCDF funds. Background check requirements apply to any staff member who is employed by a child care provider for compensation or whose activities involve the care or supervision of children or unsupervised access to children. For family child care homes, this includes the caregiver requesting a check of him/herself, as well as other adults in the household that may have unsupervised access to children. These provisions must be in place no later than September 30, 2017.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 specifies what a comprehensive criminal background check includes and a child care provider must submit a request to the appropriate State/Territory agency for a criminal background check for each child care staff member, including prospective child care staff members at least once every 5 years. A criminal background check must include a search of: State criminal and sex offender registry in the State where the staff member resides and each State where the staff member has resided over the past 5 years; State child abuse and neglect registry in the State where the staff member resides and each State where the staff

member has resided over the past 5 years, National Crime Information Center (run by the FBI); FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification ; and National Sex Offender Registry. Child care staff members cannot be employed by a provider receiving CCDF if they refuse a background check; make materially false statements in connection with the background check; are registered or required to be registered on the State or National Sex Offender Registry; have been convicted of a felony consisting of: murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crime involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, or subject to an individual review, at the State's option, a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or have been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child.

Timeliness of background checks - The State/Territory must conduct the background checks as quickly as possible and shall not exceed 45 days after the child care provider submitted the request. The State/Territory shall provide the results of the background check in a statement that indicates whether the staff member is eligible or ineligible, without revealing specific disqualifying information. If the staff member is ineligible, the State/Territory will provide information about each disqualifying crime to the staff member.

Fees for background checks - Fees that a State/Territory may charge for the costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check may not exceed actual costs to the State/Territory for processing and administration.

Transparency - The State/Territory must ensure that policies and procedures for conducting criminal background checks are published on the State/Territory's consumer education website (also see section 2.3) or other publicly available venue.

Appeals process - The State/Territory shall have a process for a child care staff member to appeal the results of their background check to challenge the accuracy and completeness.

Privacy considerations - Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks.

5.3.1 Describe the status of the State/Territory's requirements, policies, and procedures for criminal background checks for child care staff members and child care providers.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above.

List the policy citation within the Lead Agency's rules and describe the policies and procedures for criminal background checks using 5.3.2 through 5.3.9 below.

Not implemented. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2017). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2017) [09/30/2017](#)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other) [Partially implemented](#)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

a) [Partially implemented - Majority of the child care providers are non US citizens. For labor/employment purposes, they are required to secure a CW 1 or CNMI only Work Visa. A requirement of the CW 1 work visa is completion of a Federal Fingerprinting/Biometrics which became fully implemented since 2010. For US Citizens, we will use the DPS' FBI Integrated Fingerprinting Process. This will entail client submitting an application along with required documents, pay a fee of \\$10.00, the client will wait 3 weeks for the result.](#)

b) [Unmet requirement - For US Citizens, we will use the DPS' FBI Integrated Fingerprinting Process. This will entail client submitting an application along with required documents, pay a fee of \\$10.00, the client will wait 3 weeks for the result.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented. [Requirements, policies, and procedures in place to conduct criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers \(other than relatives\) that are licensed, regulated or registered under State/Territory law or receive CCDF funds.](#)

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

[Amend CCLP Regulations](#)

[By end of May, Draft amendment of CCLP Rules and Regulations drafted by the AG's Office](#)

[By End of June, translations of the amendment will be completed](#)

[By End of July Public comment is completed](#)

[By end of August, CCLP Regulation amended to include Background checks as required by the Federal CCDF](#)

[Monthly meetings between the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Public Safety to create an MOA on produres for Background checks](#)

By end of September, 2016 a formalized MOA will have been signed between CCLP and DPS

Beginning Oct. 2016, ongoing trainings will be completed by CCLP regarding Background Checks

By end of September, 2017 this requirement will be fully implemented

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 09/30/2017

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs - Child Care Licensing Program

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

1) Department of Community and Cultural Affairs - Child Care and Development Fund

2) Department of Public Safety

5.3.2 Describe the process and procedures for conducting background checks in a timely manner, including which agency/entity is responsible and how the Lead Agency ensures that background checks performed by a 3rd party meet the requirements, protecting the privacy of child care staff members, and providing opportunities for applicants to appeal the results of background checks.

Describe:

The CNMI Department of Public Safety (DPS) will conduct the background checks for providers. Through the application process with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA), Office of Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP), a list of provider names comprised of ten or more would then be submitted to DPS for fingerprinting process along with 2 valid ID's and a receipt from the CNMI Court House indicating payment was made, DPS would then send the fingerprint sets off Island for results. This would take 2 to 3 months waiting time. However, an MOA would first have to be established with DCCA and DPS and procedures or steps may change.

5.3.3 Describe how the State/Territory is assisting other States process background checks, including which agency/entity is responsible for working with other states

Describe:

Request will be made to the CNMI Department of Public Safety.

5.3.4 Does the State have a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment?

Yes.

Describe:

No.

5.3.5 Does the Lead Agency disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for other crimes not specifically listed above?

Yes.

Describe:

CCDF Rules and Regulations Section 55-60-201(e)(1)(2) clearly state that all types of providers will: have no known history of child abuse or neglect, physical or psychological /psychiatric problems, or criminal convictions that may adversely affect or interfere with the care of children. All providers will consent to conduct a child abuse record check and criminal history record check. A child care provider must not have a criminal history that poses a risk to children; these include but is not limited to:

1. violent felonies in which an individual threatens to cause, attempts to cause serious bodily injury;
2. sexually violent offenses as defined by CNMI Law or other similar offenses in other jurisdictions;
3. criminal sex offense against a minor as defined by CNMI Law or other similar offenses in other jurisdictions;
4. child abuse and neglect as defined by CNMI Law or similar offenses in other jurisdictions;
5. Violations of the CNMI Minor Children Firearms Control Act or similar offenses in other

jurisdictions;

6. Distribution of a controlled substance to persons under 18 as defined by CNMI Law or similar offenses in other jurisdictions and

6. All other criminal histories will be evaluated based on the nature and severity of the incident; the identity of the victim; the length of time since the incident; whether any specific pattern of criminal behavior exists; and specific efforts the individual has made towards rehabilitation.

No.

5.3.6 Does your State State/Territory exempt relatives (defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from background checks?

Yes, all relatives are exempt from all background check requirements.

Yes, some relatives are exempt from the background check requirements. If the State /Territory exempts some relatives from background check requirements, describe which relatives are exempt. from which requirements (some or all).

Describe.

No, relatives are not exempt from background checks.

5.3.7 Describe how fees charged for completing the background checks do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration, including how the State State/Territory ensures that 3rd party vendors or contractors do not charge fees that exceed the actual cost of processing and administration, if applicable.

Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable:

Describe.

Currently, the CNMI DPS chargers at \$10.00 per application/request.

5.3.8 Describe how background check policies and procedures are published on the State/Territory consumer education website or made publicly available on another venue:

Describe.

CCLP Program will post background check policies and procedures on the DCCA CCLP website.

5.3.9 Does the Lead Agency release aggregated data by crime?

Yes.

List types of crime included in the aggregated data:

No.

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

Teacher-child interactions and relationships, intentional strategies to engage children and their parents, and use of curriculum and assessment to inform practices with children are key components of high quality child care. These require a competent, skilled, and stable workforce. Research has shown that specialized training and education, positive and well-organized work environments and adequate compensation promote teacher recruitment, stability, diversity of the early childhood workforce, and effectiveness with young children in child care. In addition, professional development strategies that emphasize on-site mentoring and coaching of teachers have emerged as promising to change practices with children and families. Professional development, whether training, on-site coaching and mentoring, registered apprenticeship, or higher education coursework, should reflect the research and best practices of child development in all domains and cultural competence.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States and Territories to establish professional development and training requirements in key areas such as health and safety, early learning guidelines, responding to challenging behavior and engaging families. States and Territories are required to offer ongoing annual training and to establish a progression of professional development opportunities to improve knowledge and skills of CCDF providers. (658E(c)(2)(G)) An example of how a State/Territory might address this is to establish a system or framework of professional development that includes professional standards, a "career ladder" that allows an individual to build knowledge and skills in a cumulative manner from introductory training to advance level education, including obtaining credentials and post-secondary degrees. Professional development should be designed in a manner that aligns to competencies and qualifications that reflect working with children of different ages, English language learners, children with disabilities and the differentiated roles in all settings, such as teachers, teacher assistants, and directors. Training and education supporting professional development is also one of the options States and Territories have for investing their CCDF quality funds. (658G(b)(1)) ACF

encourages States and Territories to collaborate and coordinate with other early childhood educator professional development resources, such as Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grants, quality funds available through the Preschool Development grants, and funds available through Head Start and Early Head Start, to the extent practicable. Responsive, well-qualified adult caregivers are one of the most important factors in children's development and learning in child care settings. ACF strongly encourages States and Territories to link CCDF health and safety trainings (see Section 5) and child development trainings and education to this broader professional development framework as the foundation for building a knowledgeable early childhood education workforce. Questions related to requirements for recruiting and retaining a qualified and effective child care workforce have been consolidated into Section 6.

6.1 Training and Professional Development Requirements

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the State/Territory develop training and professional development requirements designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce. Such requirements shall be applicable to child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF across the entire age span from birth through age 12. (658E(c)(2)(G)) Training and professional development should be accessible and appropriate across settings and types of providers, including family child care home providers and child care center staff.

The State/Territory also must develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply and improve the quality of child care services. (658E(c)(2)(V))

For purposes of this section, the term professional development is inclusive of credit bearing coursework, postsecondary degree programs, and technical assistance (targeted assistance such as mentoring, coaching or consultation) activities. Health and safety topics that require renewal of a credential or certification should be considered continuing education unit trainings.

6.1.1 Describe the status of the State's training and professional development requirements to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce.

- a) Provide ongoing training and professional development that is accessible for the diversity of

providers in the State/Territory; provide for a progression of professional development reflecting research and best practice to meet the developmental needs of participating infants, toddlers, preschool, and school-age children and that is aligned to foundational and specialized competencies (including different ages of children, English language learners, and children with disabilities); and improve the quality and stability of the child care workforce (such as supports an individual to build on entry- and mid-level training and education (which may include higher education) to attain a higher level credential or professional certification and retention in the child care program).

b) Are developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care or other state or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC that addresses training, professional development and education of child care providers and staff.)

c) Incorporate knowledge and application of the State/Territory's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), the State/Territory's health and safety standards (as described in section 5), and incorporate social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models, which may include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in Section 2)

d) Are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF

e) Appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers caring for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups, English language learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians.

Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. Describe using 6.1.2 through 6.1.6 below.

Not implemented. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

6.1.2 Describe how the State provides ongoing training and professional development, provides for a progression of professional development (such as allows an individual to build on entry- and mid-level training and education both in terms of the skills and knowledge they attain but also in terms of credit that leads toward a higher level credential or certification, including articulation agreements) reflecting research and best practice to meet the developmental needs of participating children and improve the quality and stability of the child care workforce:

- State/Territory professional standards and competencies.

Describe.

Availability of degree programs in ECE, school-aged or youth development and related fields. The BS in Education with a concentration in ECE focuses on birth to 8 years of age, concentration in Elem. Education, Special Education and Rehabilitation and Human Services. Trainings provided by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program in partnership with the Northern Marianas College (NMC) Community Development Institute (CDI) with the assistance of School of Education (SOE). The SOE hold high standards reflective of the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and offers a curriculum which has been reviewed and is approved through the

Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission. The program is also reviewed by the institution's Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee in two year cycles. NMC also has articulation agreements with peer institutions such as University of Guam, University of Hawaii Manoa, Rio Salado College and is a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) alliance.

Career ladder or lattice.

Describe.

Articulation agreements between two- and four-year postsecondary early childhood education or degree programs.

Describe.

NMC also has articulation agreements with peer institutions such as University of Guam, University of Hawaii Manoa, Rio Salado College and is a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) alliance.

Community-based training approved by a state regulatory body to meet licensing or regulatory requirements.

Describe.

CCDF Program partners with the Community Development Institute (CDI) of the Northern Marianas College to offer free of charge trainings.

Workforce data, including recruitment, retention, registries or other documentation, and compensation information.

Describe.

Advisory structure that provides recommendations for the development, revision, and implementation of the professional development system or framework.

Describe.

Continuing education unit trainings and credit-bearing professional development.

Describe.

All trainings offered through the Northern Marianas College are provided with continuing education units.

State-approved trainings.

Describe.

Inclusion in state and/or regional workforce and economic development plans.

Describe.

Other.

Describe.

6.1.3 Describe how the State/Territory developed its training and professional development requirements in consultation with the State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care (if applicable) or other state or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC

Describe.

Currently the CNMI does not have a SAC but works in partnership with NMC in its training and professional development. Trainings provided by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program in partnership with the Northern Marianas College (NMC) Community Development Institute (CDI) with the assistance of School of Education (SOE). The SOE hold high standards reflective of the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and offers a curriculum which has been reviewed and is approved through the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission. The program is also reviewed by the institution's Program Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee in two year cycles. NMC also has articulation agreements with peer institutions such as University of Guam, University of Hawaii Manoa, Rio Salado College and is a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) alliance.

6.1.4 Describe how the State/Territory incorporates knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), the State/Territory's health and safety standards (as described in section 5), and incorporates social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models, which may include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in Section 2) into its training and professional development requirements

Describe.

Annually, the CCDF program sends out a survey on the specific needs of child care providers focusing on training and technical assistance. This survey incorporates the territory's early learning guidelines, health and safety standards, social-emotional/behavior and early childhood mental health. Trainings have been conducted on the early learning guidelines and is incorporated in the 70 hours of infant and toddler training program for caregivers. The 70 hours Training for Infant and Toddler Caregivers incorporate health and safety, socio-emotional and mental health, child development and learning, and cultural diversity needs of young children.

6.1.5 Describe how the State's training and professional development requirements are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF (as applicable)

Describe.

The CNMI does not have Indian tribes

6.1.6 Describe how the State/Territory's training and professional development requirements are appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers caring for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups (such as specialized credentials for providers who care for infants and/or school-age children), English language learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians.

Describe.

Trainings and professional developments are offered through the Northern Marianas College. These trainings are evidenced-based and addresses the specific needs of the adult learner. The training provides updated information/knowledge, skills on best practices in the care of young children. Trainers modify the class (content and materials) such that these areas as included: children with special needs, English Language learners, culture.

6.1.7 Describe the strategies the State/Territory uses to recruit and retain providers who will serve eligible children. Check all that apply and describe.

Financial assistance for attaining credentials and post-secondary degrees.

Describe.

Financial incentives linked to education attainment and retention.

Describe.

Registered apprenticeship programs.

Describe.

Outreach to high school (including career and technical) students.

Describe.

Policies for paid sick leave.

Describe.

Policies for paid annual leave.

Describe.

Policies for health care benefits.

Describe.

Policies for retirement benefits.

Describe.

Support for providers' mental health (such as training in reflective practices and stress reduction techniques, health and mental health consultation services).

Describe.

During trainings CCDF incorporates either as part of the agenda for the day or a whole training focusing on providers' mental health; such as stress reduction techniques, yoga, breathing exercises, light cardio exercises etc.

Other.

Describe.

All trainings offered by CCDF or CCDF sponsored are free of charge; educational materials

that will support providers' curriculum, financial incentives for completion of a minimum number of technical assistance hours.

6.1.8 Describe how the State/Territory will recruit providers for whom English is not their first language, or who will serve and be available for families for whom English is not their first language.

Describe.

Initiate conversations with possible providers by visiting their sites, providing outreach materials in their language. Technical assistance in terms of curriculum development, assistance in arrangement of their early childhood environment, assistance with specific educational materials, if needed, and assistance with their application process.

6.1.9 How will the Lead Agency overcome language barriers to serve providers for whom English is not their first language? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- Informational materials in non-English languages
- Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
- CCDF health and safety requirements in non-English languages
- Provider contracts or agreements in non-English languages
- Website in non-English languages
- Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- Collect information to evaluate on-going need, recruit, or train a culturally or linguistically diverse workforce
- Other.

Describe.

onsite trainings and technical assistance

- None

If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please list the primary languages offered (top 3) or specify that the State has the ability to have translation/interpretation in all primary and secondary languages

Chamorro, Carolinian, and Filipino. The State also has the ability to have

translation/interpretation in all primary languages.

6.1.10 The State/Territory must use CCDF for activities to improve the quality or availability of child care, including training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families. (658E(c)(3)(B)(i) Describe the status of the State/Territory's training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and their families (connects to Section 3.2.2).

Describe the status of the State/Territory's training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and their families (connects to Section 3.2.2).

Yes.

The State certifies that no later than March 1, 2016 it will provide training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and their families.

Describe that training and technical assistance for providers

Trainings will be offered for free on identifying and serving homeless children and their families. This training will be part of the annual training in partnership with the ECCS.

Technical Assistance for providers on identifying and serving homeless children will also be included in the QRIS.

No. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

6.2 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce with CCDF Quality Funds

States and Territories may use the quality set-aside discussed in detail in section 7 to support the training and professional development of the child care workforce.

6.2.1 If checked yes to 7.1 in the next section, check which content is included training and professional development activities. Check all that apply.

Yes, If yes,

a) Describe the measures relevant to this use of funds that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory.

CCDF program offers all trainings and technical assistance for free. At a minimum the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) as part of the QRIS will be used to evaluate CNMI's progress in improving the quality of child care services. Currently all trainings and technical assistance activities as well as incentives (monetary for completing at a minimum 10 TA hours) will be offered to providers to complete their trainings.

b) Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe:

Quality funds will be used to fund this activity. Training and technical assistance activities are offered free of charge. Providers are also provided with educational

materials and resources to support their efforts toward increasing quality care in their respective settings.

Other funds.

Describe:

Program income will also be used to fund this activity.

c) Check which content is included in training and professional development activities. Check all that apply.

Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those related to nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically-based, developmentally-appropriate and age-appropriate strategies as required in 6.1.1c.

Describe:

Trainings and TA's such as the 70 Hour Infant and Toddler Caregiver Training will include this content.

Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models that promote positive social-emotional development and early childhood mental health and reduce challenging behaviors, including reducing expulsions of preschool-aged children from birth to five for such behaviors (see also Section 2).

Describe:

Trainings and TA on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire will include these content.

Engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children's positive development.

Describe:

Trainings that will include family engagement and addressing Culture, Family, and Provider will include these content; The 70 Hour Infant and Toddler Care Training will also include discussions on this content.

Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State/Territory Early Learning and Development Standards.

Describe:

Trainings and TA focusing on the CNMI Infant and Toddler and Preschool Early Learning Guidelines will include these discussions; the 70 hour infant and toddler care training will include these content; DAP,

- On-site or accessible comprehensive services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development.

Describe:

- Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement.

Describe:

Use of program evaluations such as the ERS, Program Administration Scale, Business Administration Scale, etc.

- Caring for children of families in geographic areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment.

Describe:

- Caring for and supporting the development of children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Describe:

Disabilities Awareness training will include these content

- Supporting positive development of school-age children.

Describe:

Trainings on Developmentally Appropriate Practices will include this content.

- Other.

Describe:

d) Check how the State/Territory connects child care providers with available Federal and State/Territory financial aid, or other resources for pursuing postsecondary education relevant for the early childhood and school-age workforce. Check all that apply.

- Coaches, mentors, consultants, or other specialists available to support access to postsecondary training including financial aid and academic counseling
- State/Territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e. online calendar or listing of opportunities) of relevant postsecondary education opportunities
- Financial awards (such as scholarships, grants, loans, reimbursement for expenses) from State/Territory for completion of postsecondary education
- Other.

Describe:

All CCDF trainings are free of charge.

No.

6.2.2 Does the State/Territory require a specific number of annual training hours for child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies and in particular content areas?

States and Territories are encouraged to consult with Caring for our Children for best practices and recommended time needed to address training hour requirements.

Yes. If yes, describe:

a) Licensed Center-Based Care

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

No orientation hours but must complete at a minimum First Aid and CPR, child development and growth, health and safety and social-emotional development of young children.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

CCLP requires at least 15 hours annual trainings; CCDF at least 20 training AND TA hours. Topic areas include Child Development and Learning (general), health and safety, and social-emotional development of young children.

In order to continue receiving CCDF funds, a CCDF provider will need to complete at least a **total of 20 hours annually**. These hours will include any trainings completed under the Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP). Trainings completed under the CCLP maybe submitted to the CCDF Office for inclusion to the total 20 hours annually as required.

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

None but must complete First Aid and CPR, child growth and development, health and safety, and social-emotional development of young children.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

CCLP requires at least 15 hours annual trainings; CCDF at least 20 training AND TA hours

c) Licensed Family Child Care Provider

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

Orientation hours none, but must complete First Aid and CPR, child growth and development, health and safety, and social-emotional development.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

CCLP requires at least 15 hours annual trainings; CCDF at least 20 training AND TA hours

d) Any other eligible CCDF provider

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

None

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

CCLP requires at least 15 hours annual trainings; CCDF at least 20 training AND TA hours

No

6.2.3 Describe the status of the State/Territory's policies and practices to strengthen provider's business practices.

Fully implemented - as of March 1, 2016.

Describe the State strategies including training, education, and technical assistance to strengthen provider's business practices. This may include, but is not limited to, such practices related to fiscal management, budgeting, record-keeping, hiring, developing, and retaining qualified staff, risk management, community relationships, marketing and public relations, and parent-provider communications, including who delivers the training, education and/or technical assistance

Business trainings have been offered by the CCDF Program to providers, part of the needs assessment survey, and part of the QRIS.

Not implemented. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity

[6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines](#)

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the State/Territory will develop, maintain, or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children in a forward progression from birth to kindergarten entry (i.e., birth-to-three, three-to-five, or birth-to-five), describing what such children should know and be able to do, and covering the essential domains of early childhood development for use State/Territory wide by child care providers. (658E(c)(2)(T)) At the option of the State/Territory, early learning and development guidelines for out-of-school time may be developed. States and Territories may use the quality set-aside as discussed in section 7 to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines.

[6.3.1 Describe the status of the State's early learning and development guidelines appropriate for children from birth to kindergarten entry.](#)

- The State assures that the early learning and development guidelines are:
 - Research-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and aligned with entry to kindergarten
 - Implemented in consultation with the State educational agency and the State Advisory Council (SAC) or other state or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC
 - Updated as determined by the State. List the date or frequency

4 years

- Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above - as of March 1, 2016. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe using 6.3.2 through 6.3.4 below
- Not implemented. The State/Territory must provide a State/Territory-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). Please provide brief text responses and descriptions only. Do not cut and paste charts or tables here. Your responses will be consolidated electronically into an Implementation Plan summary report.

Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016)

Overall Status - Describe the State/Territory's overall status toward complete implementation for this requirement(s) (not yet started, partially implemented, substantially implemented, other)

Implemented requirement(s) - Identify any requirement(s) implemented to date if applicable

Tasks/Activities - What specific steps will you take to implement the unmet requirement (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.)

Projected start date for each activity:

Projected end date for each activity:

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with to complete implement this activity

6.3.2 Check for which age group(s) the State has established early learning and development guidelines:

Birth-to-three

Provide a link:

cniccdf.org

Three-to-Five

Provide a link:

cniccdf.org

Birth-to-Five

Provide a link:

cniccdf.org

Five and older (check if State/Territory has standards for five and older that complement academic but cover child development areas not covered by k-12 academic standards).

Describe and provide a link:

Other.

Describe:

6.3.3 Does the State/Territory use CCDF quality funds to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines by providing technical assistance to child care providers to enhance children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and support children's overall well-being?

Yes, the State/Territory has a system of technical assistance operating State/Territory-wide

Yes, the State/Territory has a system of technical assistance operating as a pilot or in a few localities

No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase

No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

a) If yes, check all that apply to the technical assistance and describe.

Child care providers are supported in developing and implementing curriculum/learning activities based on the State's/Territory's early learning and

development guidelines.

Describe:

Training has been offered to providers in the use of the ELG's. The use of the ELG's are identified at the Star 3 level of the CNMI Pilot QRIS. Ongoing assistance addressing provider needs on educational materials to support their implementation of the ELG.

- The technical assistance is linked to the State's/Territory's quality rating and improvement system.

Describe:

At Star 3 level of the pilot, the use of the ELG's is identified.

- Child care providers working with infants and/or toddlers have access to the technical assistance for implementing early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

- Child care providers working with preschool-age children have access to the technical assistance for implementing early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

- Child care providers working with school-age children have access to the technical assistance for implementing early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

b) Indicate which funds are used for this activity (check all that apply)

- CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

Quality Set Aside, Infant and Toddler,

- Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

no other funding souce.

6.3.4 Check here to demonstrate that State/Territory assures that CCDF funds will not be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that: (658E(c)(2)(T)(ii)(I))

- Will be the primary or sole basis to determine a child care provider ineligible to participate in the CCDF program
- Will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider
- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF program
- Will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing effectiveness of child care programs
- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF program

Yes.

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to reserve and use a portion of their Child Care and Development Block Grant funds for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care. Support for continuous quality improvement is expected to cover the entire age span of children supported by CCDF, from birth through age 12. States/Territories may provide these quality improvement activities directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities. The activities should be in alignment with a State/Territory-wide assessment of the State's/Territory's needs to carry out such services and care. These quality investments can align with, support and help sustain additional quality efforts developed under Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grants, Early Head Start/Head Start partnerships and other funding efforts.

States and Territories will report on these quality improvement investments through CCDF in three ways: 1) ACF will collect annual data on how much CCDF funding is spent on quality activities using the expenditure report (ACF-696); 2) In the Plan, States and Territories will describe the types of activities supported by quality investments over the three-year period; and 3) For each three-year Plan period, States and Territories will submit a separate annual report that will show the measures used by the State/Territory to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States and Territories to use the quality set-aside to fund at least one of the following 10 activities:

1) Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce (as described in Section 6)

- 2) Improving on the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines (as described in Section 6)
- 3) Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating system for child care providers and services
- 4) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers
- 5) Establishing or expanding a Statewide system of child care resource and referral services (as described Section 1)
- 6) Supporting compliance with State/Territory requirements for licensing, inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety (as described in Section 5)
- 7) Evaluating the quality of child care programs in the State/Territory, including evaluating how programs positively impact children
- 8) Supporting providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation
- 9) Supporting the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development
- 10) Other activities to improve the quality of child care services as long as outcome measures relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten-entry are possible.

Throughout this Plan, States and Territories will describe the types of quality improvement activities where CCDF investments are being made, including but not limited to, the quality set-aside funds. We recognize that for some areas, States and Territories may leverage other funds to support the quality improvement goals, which we encourage and support. For example, activities related to early learning and development guidelines may be supported by a combination of CCDF and education funding. States and Territories continue to have such flexibility.

[7.1 Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services](#)

7.1.1 What are your overarching goals for quality improvement?

Please describe how the State/Territory selected these goals, including any data or the State/Territory-wide assessment of needs that identified the needs for quality improvement

services

As part of our QRIS Pilot, baseline observations were completed using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised or ECERS-R. Based on these observations, it was noted that continued training focusing on health and safety and supporting socio-emotional needs of children were needed. Trainings and technical assistance focused on these topics will be a priority. More importantly, as the QRIS pilot continues, we will be able to better identify specific needs of providers in terms of quality improvements.

CCDF will also continue to provide the Annual Training and TA Needs Assessment to gather topics of interests from providers.

7.1.2 Check and describe which of the following specified quality improvement activities the State/Territory is investing in:

- Developing, implementing or enhancing a tiered quality rating system. If checked, respond to 7.2. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)
 - CCDF funds.
Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)
Quality Set Aside, Infant and Toddler Set Aside And Program Income will be used to develop and implement a tiered quality rating system.
 - Other funds.
Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

- Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. If checked, respond to 7.3. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)
 - CCDF funds.
Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)
 - Other funds.
Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Establishing or expanding a statewide system of CCR&R services as discussed in 1.7. If checked, respond to 7.4. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Facilitating compliance with State/Territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety standards (as described in Section 5). If checked, respond to 7.5. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the State/Territory. If checked, respond to 7.6. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

[Quality Set Aside, Infant and Toddler Set Aside; Program INcome](#)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Supporting accreditation. If checked, respond to 7.7. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Supporting State/Territory or local efforts to develop high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. If checked, respond to 7.8. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

[Quality Set Aside, Infant-Toddler Set Aside, and Program Income](#)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

Other activities determined by the State/Territory to improve the quality of child care services, and for which measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or entry into kindergarten is possible. If checked, respond to 7.9. Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe CCDF funds (e.g., quality set-aside, infant-toddler set aside, etc.)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

[7.2 Quality Rating and Improvement System](#)

[7.2.1 Does your State/Territory have a quality rating and improvement system \(QRIS\)?](#)

Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS operating State/Territory-wide.

Describe how the QRIS is administered (e.g., state or locally administered such as through CCR&Rs) and provide a link, if available

Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS operating as a pilot, in a few localities, or only a few levels

Provide a link, if available

No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase

No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

a) If yes, check all that apply to your QRIS.

Participation is voluntary

Participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving subsidy.

If checked, describe the relationship between QRIS participation and subsidy (minimum rating required, participation at any level, etc.)

the CNMI is currently in the pilot phase of its QRIS. Star 1 will mean that the provider at a minimum has been at licensed for at least 6 months. Base rate will not exceed the maximum rate by CCDF. At Star 2, Provider will need to meet standards set for Health and Safety, Staffing and Professional Development, Child Growth and Development, Children with Disabilities, Family Partnership and Family Strengthening, and Leadership and Management. Providers at this level will be paid the base rate however incentives will be given to the program as well as staff bonuses. At Star 3, provider will need to meet the standards as described above. For this level, the provider will be given an additional 5% of their monthly base rate with an annual provider grant of not less than \$2000 as well as staff bonuses. At Star 4, provider will need to meet the standards as described above. At this level, the provider will be given an additional 7% of their monthly base rate with an annual provider grant of not less than \$3000 for quality improvement plan with staff bonuses.

Participation is required for all providers

Includes nationally-recognized accreditation as a way to meet/achieve QRIS rating levels

Supports and assesses the quality of child care providers in the State/Territory

- Builds on State/Territory licensing standards and other State/Territory regulatory standards for such providers
- Embeds licensing into the QRIS.

Describe:

- Designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers and services
- Describes the safety of child care facilities
- Addresses the business practices of programs
- Builds the capacity of State/Territory early childhood programs and communities to promote parents' and families' understanding of the State/Territory's early childhood system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled
- Provides, to the maximum extent practicable, financial incentives and other supports designed to expand the full diversity of child care options and help child care providers improve the quality of services.

If checked, please describe how these financial options link to responses in Section 4.3 related to higher payment rates tied to quality

Aside from providers receiving a tiered reimbursement, programs are provided a monetary grant that will help address areas identified in their QRIS observations. Teachers and caregivers, will also have a separate financial incentive tied to the QRIS rating of their program.

- Can be used to track trends in whether children receiving subsidy are utilizing rated care settings and level of rating

b) If yes, which types of settings or distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care participate in the State's/Territory's QRIS? Check all that apply.

- Licensed child care centers
- Licensed family child care homes
- License-exempt providers
- Early Head Start programs
- Head Start programs
- State pre-kindergarten or preschool program
- Local district supported pre-kindergarten programs
- Programs serving infants and toddlers

- Programs serving school-age children
- Faith-based settings
- Other.

Describe:

7.2.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory.

Describe:

CCDF Program will continue to use the environment rating scales (ERS, Program Administration Scale (PAS) and Business Administration Scale (BAS) to assist in identifying program improvements and areas of need by each provider. The QRIS pilot will also provide information on program quality, areas for improvement and need by providers.

7.3 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

The CCDBG Act of 2014 included changes targeted at improving the supply and quality of infant-toddler care. Lead Agencies are encouraged to systematically assess and improve the overall quality of care infants and toddlers receive, the systems in place or needed to support and enhance the quality of infant and toddler providers and the capacity of the infant and toddler workforce to meet the unique needs of very young children, and the methods in place to increase the proportion of infants and toddlers in higher quality care.

7.3.1 What activities are being implemented by the State/Territory to improve the supply (see also section 4) and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers?

Check all that apply and describe.

- Establishing or expanding high-quality community or neighborhood-based family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order

to improve the quality of early childhood services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to infants and toddlers from low-income families.

Describe:

- Establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks.

Describe:

- Providing training and professional development to promote and expand child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers.

Describe:

CCDF will offer training and professional development free of charge to all providers (licensed, license-exempt) whether receiving subsidy or not; CCDF will continue to partner with the local community college to ensure that trainings provided are researched based . Currently, there is an on-going 70 hours infant and toddler caregiver trainings easily accessible to all providers.

- Providing financial incentives (including the use of grants and contracts as discussed in section 4) to increase the supply and quality of infant-toddler care.

Describe:

CCDF will offer grants to providers to address their educational materials needs; educational materials that will support their use of the ELG's and when funds are available address healthy and safety at their programs

- Providing coaching and/or technical assistance on this age group's unique needs from Statewide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists.

Describe:

CCDF will provide coaching and TA as part of its QRIS

- Coordinating with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.)

Describe:

- Developing infant and toddler components within the State's/Territory's QRIS.

Describe:

The CNMI QRIS has specific components for infants and toddlers within the QRIS. The use of the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale is evident in the standards.

- Developing infant and toddler components within the State's/Territory's child care licensing regulations.

Describe:

the Child Care Licensing Program has specific section for infant and toddler programs that address such things as: program provisions, communications between parents and caregivers, staffing requirements, staff-child ratios and group size, staffing patterns, emergency care provisions, admission of infants and toddlers with disabilities, environment hazards, etc.

- Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

- Improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy to understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care.

Describe:

Outreach activities will also focus on improving parents ability to access consumer information about high quality infant and toddler care.

Infant and Toddler training for parens will also be made available to the community.

- Carrying out other activities determined by the State/Territory to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State/Territory, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler cognitive and physical development, or infant and toddler well-being.

Describe:

Continued and on-going partnership with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS), WIC, HOME, on activities that will improve the quality of infant and toddler care. These partnerships may include but is not limited to: trainings and technical assistance and outreach efforts.

- Other.

Describe:

7.3.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

To evaluate the CNMI's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services, we will look at providers meeting the health and safety requirements and number of citations, results of the ERS observations, and once the QRIS is in full implementation, the movement of the providers' QRIS level.

7.4 Child Care Resource & Referral

7.4.1 Describe the status of the child care resource and referral system

State/Territory has a CCR&R system operating State/Territory-wide.

Describe how the CCR&R system is operated, including how many agencies and if there is a statewide network and how the system is coordinated and if it is voluntary

The CNMI does not have a CCR&R system. However, for purposes of child care referrals, the offices of CCDF and CCLP readily provide information to families and refer them to agencies or programs that could further assist them.

State/Territory has a CCR&R system operating in a few localities but not fully operating State/Territory-wide

Describe:

State/Territory is in the development phase

7.4.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

The CNMI does not have a CCR&R. CCDF and CCLP Programs serve as a resource for parents regarding quality child care and services. Both programs will continue to use the ERS, PAS, BAS, assessment tools to assess program quality. These tools will also assist in identifying areas of improvement and need.

7.5 Facilitating Compliance with State Standards

7.5.1 What strategies does your State/Territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers' compliance with State/Territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State/Territory licensing standards?

Describe:

All trainings focusing on inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety are provided free of charge for all CCDF providers, parents, and community members. Outreach activities such as Village to Village, Week of the Young Child/Early Childhood Month Celebrations, billboards, printing of informational brochures, booklets, newspaper ads, radio slots, website, will also be funded to facilitate compliance as well as to inform the community regarding health and safety measures. Materials that will support a child care provider's compliance with requirements for inspections, monitoring, training, and health and safety will be supported by CCDF funds. These materials may include but is not limited to the following: children's educational materials, emergency preparedness items and kits-such as flashlights, emergency lights, teacher resource materials, fire extinguishers, fire alams, and other items identified during their ERS visits.

7.5.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

CCDF will continue to utilize the ERS tools, PAS, BAS, community participation in outreach events, Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment request and participation as well as information gathered from the QRIS pilot will assist in identifying progression in the improvement of quality child care programs and services.

7.6 Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Programs and Services

7.6.1 One of the purposes of the CCDBG Act of 2014 is to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings.

Describe how the State/Territory measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State/Territory, including any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the State/Territory evaluates that such programs positively impact children

CCDF will continue to use the ERS tools, PAS, BAS, and when needed CLASS. The QRIS Pilot will also provide more information regarding the effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the CNMI.

7.6.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

CCDF should see more interest in participation or request of trainings related to the ERS, PAS, BAS, and QRIS standards. These requests will reflect in the annual Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment Survey.

7.7 Accreditation Support

7.7.1 Does the State/Territory support child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality?

Yes, the State/Territory has supports operating State/Territory-wide.

Describe the supports for all types of accreditation the State/Territory provides to child care centers and family child care homes to achieve accreditation

Yes, the State/Territory has supports operating as a pilot or in a few localities

Describe:

- No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase
- No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

7.7.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

Not Applicable

7.8 Program Standards

7.8.1 What other State/Territory or local efforts, if any, is the State/Territory supporting to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development?

Please describe:

Continued partnership with Public Health's Let's Move Activities, Let's Move Child Care Activities, Community Based Summer Program Grants. These outreach efforts are made available throughout the CNMI and focuses on addressing such measures as health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity and physical development of children birth to 12 years.

7.8.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State/Territory

Describe:

Through these activities CCDF should see more community participation at these events and lifestyle changes that will improve children's health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity and physical development.

7.9 Other Quality Improvement Activities

7.9.1 List and describe any other activities the State/Territory provides to improve the quality of child care services and describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State/Territory will use to evaluate the State/Territory's progress in improving provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or entry into kindergarten.

Continually finding ways to partner or collaborate with other programs to maximize resources. Measures to evaluate progress will include attendance to these partnership and collaboration meetings as well as full participation in the identified activities of the partners.

8 Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability

Under CCDF, program integrity and accountability activities are grounded in the State/Territory's policies for implementing the CCDF program. For error rate activities, reviews are based on the State/Territory's own CCDF policies. The CCDBG Act of 2014 made sweeping changes to the program requirements. With these changes, the State/Territory has an opportunity to change their own policies to reduce the burden for participants and staff as they build in safeguards to maintain program integrity. For example, the new law focuses on eligibility requirements at the time of eligibility determination and allows for a minimum 12-month period of eligibility before redetermination, which lessens the need for participants to continually provide documentation. This, in turn, relieves the State/Territory from the burden of constantly "checking" on participants which can open the door for miscalculations, lost paperwork, and other errors.

Lead Agencies are required to have accountability measures in place to ensure integrity and to identify fraud or other program violations. These accountability measures should address administrative error, including unintentional agency error, as well as program violations, both unintentional and intentional. Violations may or may not result in further action by the Lead Agency, including those cases suspected of and/or prosecuted for fraud.

8.1 Program Integrity

8.1.1 Describe how the State ensures that their definitions for violations have been modified, staff trained, and program integrity procedures revised to reflect new

requirements.

Describe:

CCDF will ensure that specific sections affected by the new law will be amended, changed, updated. New policies will be immediately provided as well as trainings will be offered to all CCDF staff.

8.1.2 Describe how the State/Territory ensures that all staff are informed and trained regarding changes made to its policies and procedures to reflect new CCDF requirements.

Check all that apply.

- Issue policy change notices
- Issue new policy manual
- Staff training
 - Orientations
 - Onsite training
 - Online training
- Regular check-ins to monitor implementation of the new policies.

Describe:

CCDF Admin. Manger will continue monthly meetings to address questions or further clarification regarding new policies

- Other.

Describe:

8.1.3 Describe the processes the Lead Agency will use to monitor all sub-recipients, including those described in Section 1, such as licensing agencies, child care resource and referral agencies, and others with a role in administering CCDF.

The Lead Agency is responsible for ensuring effective internal controls over the administration of CCDF funds. Lead Agencies that use other governmental or non-governmental sub-recipients to administer the program must have written agreements in place outlining roles and responsibilities for meeting CCDF requirements.

Definition: "Subrecipient means a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a Federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency (2 CFR 200.93). Two CFR Part 200, Subpart A provides additional information on contractors (which may be referred to as "vendors"). The description of monitoring must include, but is not limited to, a description of the written agreements used, a schedule for completing the tasks, a budget which itemizes categorical expenditures consistent with CCDF requirements and indicators or measures to assess performance. Additional items for discussion may include: fiscal management, review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with CCDF regulations, and monitoring/auditing contractors or grantees to ensure that eligible children are served and eligibility documentation is verified."

Describe:

The following process will ensure that there will be continuous monitoring of sub-recipients.

1. Entities or organizations will complete an MOA that will describe the responsibilities of the program/s. The MOA will also include timelines of when reports or updates are due.
2. Sub-recipient will agree to announced and unannounced visits by the CCDF Program staff and must make available any and all files and documents related to the agreed upon activities.
3. Ongoing training and TA will be offered the organization to ensure that both the CCDF Program and the organization understand responsibilities.

8.1.4 Describe the activities the Lead Agency has in place to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure program integrity using the series of questions below. Program violations may include intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations as defined by the Lead Agency.

Administrative error refers to areas identified through the Error Rate Review process. Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud or other program violations.

a) Check which activities the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify unintentional or intentional program violations.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS))

Run system reports that flag errors (include types)

Describe:

CCDF uses the Data Tracker to compile and save data. The Administrative Data Specialist (ADS) is responsible for any and all reports related to the CCDF Program. At a minimum, the ADS will run system reports once a month to flag errors.

Review of enrollment documents, attendance or billing records

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews

Audit provider records

Train staff on policy and/or audits

Other.

Describe:

None.

Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address program integrity along with action steps and completion timelines:

b) Check which activities the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify administrative error.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS))

Run system reports that flag errors (include types)

Describe:

Review of enrollment documents, attendance or billing records

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews

- Audit provider records
- Train staff on policy and/or audits
- Other.

Describe:

- None.

Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address program integrity along with action steps and completion timelines:

8.1.5 Which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use to investigate and collect improper payments due to program violations or administrative error as defined in your State/Territory?

The Lead Agency has the flexibility to recover misspent funds as a result of errors. The Lead Agency is required to recover misspent funds as a result of fraud.

a) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use for unintentional program violations?

- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment.

Identify the minimum dollar amount: **\$1.00**

- Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g., State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)
- Recover through repayment plans
- Reduce payments in subsequent months
- Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts
- Recover through other means
- Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

Describe:

- Other.

Describe:

None.

Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to unintentional program violations, including action steps and completion timelines

b) Check which activities the Lead Agency will use for intentional program violations or fraud?

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment.

Identify the minimum dollar amount: \$1.00

Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g., State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)

Recover through repayment plans

Reduce payments in subsequent months

Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts

Recover through other means

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

Describe composition of unit below

Other.

Describe:

None.

Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to fraud, include action steps and completion timelines:

c) Check which activities the Lead Agency will use for administrative error?

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment.

Identify the minimum dollar amount: \$1.00

- Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g., State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)
- Recover through repayment plans
- Reduce payments in subsequent months
- Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts
- Recover through other means
- Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

Describe composition of unit below

- Other.

Describe:

- None.

Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to administrative error, including action steps and completion timelines

8.1.6 What type of sanction will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations?

The Lead Agency is required to impose sanctions on clients and providers in response to fraud.

- Disqualify client.

If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified:

CCDF Administrative Rules and Regulations provide for an Administrative Appeal Request for disqualified clients. The client may file a written request for an administrative appeal, this request is submitted to the DCCA Office of the Secretary within 10 calendar days of the date the notice was delivered to the family. The hearing shall be informal and audio-recorded. The CNMI Attorney General shall issue a written decision to the CCDF Program within 30 days after the hearing.

- Disqualify provider.

If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified:

CCDF Administrative Rules and Regulations provide for an Administrative Appeal Request for disqualified clients. The client may file a written request for an administrative appeal, this request is submitted to the DCCA Office of the Secretary within 10 calendar days of the date the notice was delivered to the family. The hearing shall be informal and audio-recorded. The CNMI Attorney General shall issue a written decision to the CCDF Program within 30 days after the hearing

Prosecute criminally

Other.

Describe: