



## **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 Plain Language Summary of Statutory Changes**

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**

- Requires States to establish health and safety requirements in 10 different topic areas (e.g., prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), first-aid, and CPR).
- Child care providers serving children receiving assistance through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program must receive pre-service and ongoing training on such topics.
- Requires States 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 specifies disqualifying crimes.
- Requires States to certify child care providers will comply with child abuse reporting requirements.
- Requires States to conduct pre-licensure and annual unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers and annual inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers.
- States must establish qualifications and training for licensing inspectors and appropriate inspector-to-provider ratios.
- Requires States 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.
- Requires emergency preparedness planning and statewide disaster plans for child care.

### **TRANSPARENT CONSUMER AND PROVIDER EDUCATION INFORMATION**

- States must make available by electronic means, easily accessible provider-specific information showing results of monitoring and inspection reports, as well as the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occur in child care settings each year.
- Requires States to 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.
- Funds a national website to disseminate consumer education information that allows search by zip code and referral to local child care providers, as well as a national hotline for reporting child abuse and neglect.

### **FAMILY-FRIENDLY ELIGIBILITY POLICIES**

- Establishes a 12-month eligibility re-determination period for CCDF families, 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.
- Allows States the option to terminate assistance prior to re-determination if a parent loses employment, however assistance must be continued for at least 3 months to allow for job search.



- Eligibility re-determination should not require parents to unduly disrupt their employment.
- Provides 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.
- Requires procedures for enrollment of homeless children pending completion of documentation, and training and outreach to promote access to services for homeless families.

#### ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE

- Phases-in increase in minimum quality set-aside from 4% to 9% over a 5-year period. In addition, requires States to spend minimum of 3% to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers.
- Requires States to spend quality funds on at least 1 of 10 specified quality activities, which include developing tiered quality rating systems and supporting statewide resource and referral services.
- Requires establishment of professional development and training requirements with ongoing annual training and progression to improve knowledge and skills of CCDF providers.
- Requires States to implement Early Learning and Development Guidelines describing what children should know and be able to do, appropriate from birth to kindergarten entry.
- Includes provisions on social-emotional health of children, including providing consumer and provider education about policies regarding expulsions of children from early care and education programs and developmental screenings for children at risk of cognitive or developmental delays.

#### TRIBES

- Tribal set-aside: Establishes a set-aside of not less than 2% (prior law said up to 2%) for Tribes.
- The law does not indicate the extent to which many of the new provisions apply to Tribes.<sup>1</sup>

#### OTHER PROVISIONS

- *Equal Access*: Requires States to conduct a market rate survey, or use an alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model, and describe how payment rates will be established based on results of the survey or alternative methodology, taking into account cost of providing higher quality services.
- *Supply-building*: States must develop strategies for increasing supply and quality of services for children in underserved areas, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children in non-traditional hour care—which may include use of grants/contracts and alternative reimbursement.
- *Provider payment practices*: States must establish policies that reflect generally accepted payment practices for child care providers, including (to the extent practicable) paying for absence days, and timely reimbursement for child care services.
- *Technical assistance set-aside*: Establishes a set-aside of up to ½ of 1% for technical assistance on administering the CCDF program.
- *Research set-aside*: Establishes a set-aside of up to ½ of 1% to conduct research and demonstration activities, as well as periodic, external, independent evaluations of the CCDF program.
- *Plan period*: Changes CCDF Plan period from 2 to 3-year Plan cycle.
- *Waiver authority*: Allows HHS to waive provisions or penalties in the statute for up to 3 years (with the option of a 1 year extension) based on a request from a State identifying duplicative requirements preventing effective delivery of child care services, extraordinary circumstances, or an extended period of time for a State legislature to enact legislation to implement the statute.

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<sup>1</sup> The Office of Child Care will issue policy guidance on how provisions apply to Tribes after consultation with Tribal Leaders and administrators.

