

# Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan For Alabama FFY 2016-2018

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## 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: [Alabama Department of Human Resources](#)

Address of Lead Agency: [50 N. Ripley Street, Montgomery, AL 36130](#)

Name and Title of the Lead Agency Official: [Nancy T. Buckner, Commissioner](#)

Phone Number: [\(334\) 242-1162](#)

E-Mail Address: [nancy.buckner@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:nancy.buckner@dhr.alabama.gov)

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): [www.dhr.alabama.gov](http://www.dhr.alabama.gov)

### 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: [Faye Nelson](#)

Title of CCDF Administrator: [Acting Director](#)

Address of CCDF Administrator: [50 N Ripley Street, PO Box 304000](#)

Phone Number: [334-242-9378](#)

E-Mail Address: [faye.nelson@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:faye.nelson@dhr.alabama.gov)

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

Name of CCDF Co-Administrator:

Title of CCDF Co-Administrator:

Phone Number:

E-Mail Address:

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator:

**c) Primary Contact Information for the CCDF Program:**

Phone Number for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any): [334-242-1425](tel:334-242-1425)

Web Address for CCDF program (for the public) (if any): [www.dhr.alabama.gov](http://www.dhr.alabama.gov)

Web Address for CCDF program policy manual (if any): [Not available](#)

Web Address for CCDF program administrative rules (if any): [Not available](#)

**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 [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

Subsidy/Financial Assistance (section 3 and section 4)

Agency/Department/Entity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

Licensing/Monitoring (section 5)

Agency/Department/Entity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

Child Care Workforce (section 6)

Agency/Department/Entity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

Quality Improvement (section 7)

Agency/Department/Entity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

Grantee Accountability/Program Integrity (section 8)

Agency/Department/Entity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Name of Lead Contact [Faye Nelson, Acting Director](#)

## [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.

Eligibility is determined by regional Child Care Management Agencies (CMAs). The CMAs are local community-based non-profit agencies and includes one state university. There are three Child Care Management Agencies operating in 9 regions. The three agencies are Child Care Management Agency of North Central Alabama, Family Guidance Center of Alabama, and TCR Child Care Corporation. The agencies and the counties served are listed at [www.dhr.alabama.gov/counties/daycare\\_agency.aspx](http://www.dhr.alabama.gov/counties/daycare_agency.aspx) .

Other.

Describe.

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

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Describe.

The lead agency maintains a database of legally operating child care programs and information on choosing child care. The lead agencies maintains a toll free number where consumers can call to obtain information on the licensing status, substantiated complaints and referrals to other services.

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.

Regional Child Care Management Agencies (CMAs) and regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) assist parents with locating child care. One of the regional agencies is a state university. There are three CMAs operating in 9 regions. The three agencies are Child Care Management Agency of North Central Alabama, Family Guidance Center of Alabama, and TCR Child Care Corporation. The CMA agencies and the counties served are listed at [http://dhr.alabama.gov/counties/daycare\\_agency.aspx](http://dhr.alabama.gov/counties/daycare_agency.aspx). There are 7 Regional QEAs operating in 9 regions. The QEA agencies and counties served are listed at [http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/Quality\\_Overview.aspx](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/Quality_Overview.aspx).

Other.

Describe.

c) Who issues payments?

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Describe.

The lead agency contracts with Xerox State and Local Solutions to issue payments through direct deposit to the child care provider's bank account.

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.

### 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](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)(I)(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:

[Input on the State Plan was requested from local government agencies. A letter was sent to the League of Municipalities and the Association of County Commissions of Alabama requesting input on the CCDF Plan from their membership.](#)

[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:

Input on the State Plan was requested from the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education. This agency houses the work of the State Advisory Council through the Children's Policy Council.

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

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

Describe, including which Tribe(s) you consulted with

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is the federally recognized tribal organization in the state. A copy of the draft plan and request for review was sent to the organization. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians has a representative on the lead agency Child Care Coordinating Committee. The Committee is charged with advising the department on child care issues and making recommendations for ongoing services.

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

State/Territory agency responsible for public education.

Describe:

Input was requested from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). ALSDE is a member of the Lead Agency Child Care Coordinating Committee and provides input to the lead agency on child care services and policy throughout year.

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:

Input was requested from the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), Early Intervention System. ADRS, Early Intervention System is a member of the Lead Agency Child Care Coordinating Committee and provides input to the lead agency on child care services and policy throughout year.

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

Describe:

A copy of the draft plan and request for input was sent to the Alabama Community College System and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. Throughout the year the lead agency coordinates with Alabama Community College System issues related to scholarships in Child Development and Early Care and Education, credit-bearing course work for the CDA (Child Development Associate) Credential and credit for experiential learning. Alabama Community College System is a member of the Lead Agency Child Care Coordinating Committee and provides input to the lead agency on CCDF policy throughout year.

State/Territory agency responsible for child care licensing.

Describe:

The Alabama Department of Human Resources is the agency responsible for child care licensing of centers and home day care. Child Care licensing reviewed the document and completed information on the lead agency licensing standards.

State/Territory office/director for Head Start State collaboration

Describe:

The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is houses the Head Start Collaboration Office. A copy of the draft plan and a request for comment was sent to DECE. The Head Start Collaboration office is a member of the Lead Agency Child Care Coordinating Committee and provides input to the lead agency on child care services and policy throughout year.

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

Describe:

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) is the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership grantee in Alabama. A draft plan was sent to the EHS-CCP Governance

Committee and Policy Council for review and input.

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:

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

First Teacher, Alabama's Home Visiting program is housed within the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE). A copy of the draft plan was shared with the agency for input and review.

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

Describe:

McKinney-Vento State coordinators for Homeless Education.

Describe:

State/Territory agency responsible for public health.

Describe:

Input was requested from the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). ADPH is a member of the Lead Agency Child Care Coordinating Committee and provides input to the lead agency on CCDF policy throughout year. The Lead Agency partners with teh ADPH to implement Health Child Care Alabama, nurse health consultant services.

State/Territory agency responsible for mental health.

Describe:

State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe:

The CCDF Lead Agency is also the agency responsible for child welfare. A copy of the draft plan and a request for comment was sent to the State agency and to the 67 County offices that administer child welfare services locally. The County agencies were a contact point for any member of the public who wanted to review the plan or receive a copy of the Plan.

State/Territory liaison for military child care programs.

Describe:

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

The CCDF Lead Agency is also the agency responsible for TANF services. A copy of the draft plan and a request for comment was sent to the State agency and to the 67 County offices that administer TANF services locally. The County agencies were a contact point for any member of the public who wanted to review the plan or receive a copy of the Plan.

State/community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families.

Describe:

Child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

The Department contracts with regional Child Care Management Agencies (CMA) and regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) that are responsible for resource and referral within their designated region. CMAs and QEAs are local non-profit community-based agencies. A copy of the draft plan and a request for comment was sent to each

organization. CMAs and QEAs were a contact point for any member of the public who wanted to review the plan or receive a copy of the Plan.

Provider groups or associations.

Describe:

Provider groups including FOCAL (Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama), AALECE (Alabama Association of Licensed Early Care and Education), AAYC (Alabama Association for Young Children), Alabama Family Child Care Association were sent a draft of the plan for review. A copy of the draft plan and a request for comment was sent to each organization.

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: 01/20/2016

**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.

Notice of the hearing was advertised in Alabama's eight largest newspapers. The notice advised of the date and location of the public hearing. To reinforce the notification process, notice of the public hearing was sent to the Lead Agency's 67 county offices, Child Care Management Agencies, and Quality Enhancement Agencies to facilitate broad access by the public. These agencies gave notice of the hearing through communication with parents and providers. Letters were sent to statewide provider associations within the state. Email notification and the draft plan was sent to members of Lead Agency workgroups and advisory groups, including the Child Care Coordinating Committee, the Family Child Care QRIS Standards Committee, the EHS-CCP Governance Committee and the EHS-CCP Policy Council. Members of these workgroups and advisory groups were asked for their input on the document and to share the document with their constituents. Notice of the date and location of the public hearing was posted on the lead agency website at [http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services\\_Division.aspx](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services_Division.aspx).

c) Date(s) of public hearing(s): 02/12/2016

**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 : Gordon Person Building Auditorium, 50 N Ripley Street, Montgomery, AL. Montgomery, the state capital, is centrally located to allow for those who wanted to participate in person to do so without significant travel. The notice advises that written comments could be accepted by mail, email and fax and the contact information was provided in the notice.

e) Describe how the content of the Plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s) Notice of the plan was given to child care center provider associations across the state. Individual notice was written to each child care center provider association president to encourage participation by the membership. The hearing notice included an email address ([childcare.susbsidy@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:childcare.susbsidy@dhr.alabama.gov)) to accommodate comments from providers, parents and others who could not attend the public hearing. The public hearing notice was included on the Lead Agency website. A copy of the draft Plan is placed on the Lead Agency website, is available at CMA offices and available at County Department offices. The Lead Agency website allows for the site and documents on the site to translate to multiple languages.

f) How will the information provided by the public be taken into consideration in the provision of child care services under this Plan? Public comment will be considered in understanding potential gaps in services, ways to collaborate with existing resources within the state to

expand services, and exploring ways that the new services may be implemented in the future to meet the needs of families and to provide access to high quality care within the guidelines of state and federal regulations and funding priorities.

**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:

A draft copy of the plan was made available to lead agency work groups and advisory groups including the Child Care Coordinating Committee; the Family Child Care QRIS Standards committee; the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Policy Council; and the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Governance Committee.

Working with child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

Draft documents was provided to community-based agencies with whom the lead agencies contracts to provide resource and referral, consumer education and eligibility determinations. These agencies have local office throughout the state.

Providing translation in other languages.

Describe:

The draft document was placed on the Lead agency website. The website has capability to translate documents in a variety of languages.

Making available on the Lead Agency website.

List the website:

The draft document is posted on the lead agency's website at [http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/Child\\_Care\\_Services\\_Division.aspx](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/Child_Care_Services_Division.aspx).

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

A draft document was provided to various stakeholders, advocate groups, provider associations and collaborative agencies: including VOICES for Alabama's Children; Alabama Association of Licensed Early Care and Education (AALECE); Alabama Association for Young Children (AAYC); Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Parent

as Teachers; HIPPY (Home Instructions for Parents of Preschool Youngsters); Alabama Home Day Care Association; and FOCAL (Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama).

Other.

Describe:

## 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 lead agency is working on an initiative that will align the lead agencies' Early Learning Guidelines with the, Pre-K Standards, Head Start Child Development Framework, and State Department of Education Course of Study and Extended Standards. The lead agency provides services to extend the day for children in Pre-K and Head Start programs.

[REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] Tribal early childhood programs.

Describe, including which Tribes coordinating with:

The Tribal Organization in Alabama is the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. The Lead Agency makes training and professional development opportunities available to Tribal child care facilities and facilities serving Tribal families. All child care programs receive training calendars from the regional Quality Enhancement Agencies that serves their county. The regional Quality Enhancement Agencies also list training opportunities on their individual websites.

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 lead agency coordinates with the Department of Public Health and United Cerebral Palsy. Both agencies provide statewide support to child care programs serving all age groups of children with disabilities including infant/toddlers. The programs identify and make referrals of infants and toddlers to the Alabama Early Intervention System. United Cerebral Palsy works with child care programs to integrate adaptive concepts for children with disabilities into the program structure.

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

Describe:

The lead agency will coordinate with the Alabama State Department of Education, Head Start Collaboration Office and the Alabama Department Early Childhood Education - State Pre-K to align policy for serving homeless families with the policies already in place within these entities. The coordination will enable the lead agency to prioritize care to homeless families and thereby allowing the families to readily gain access to services.

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency is also the state agency for child protective services including foster care services. CCDF services coordinate with foster care unit to provide priority for care for children in foster care. Services are offered through a referral system thereby reduces the need for families to attend multiple interviews to assess eligibility.

State/Territory agency responsible for child care licensing.

Describe:

The Lead Agency is the also the state agency responsible for child care licensing. The coordination between licensing and CCDF agency helps streamline the identification of eligible providers and reduces the amount of additional documentation requested from providers.

State/Territory agency with Head Start State collaboration grant.

Describe:

The Head Start State Collaboration office is housed within the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education. The State Collaboration Director serves on various committees for the CCDF lead agency including the Child Care Coordinating Committee, the Family Child Care QRIS Steering committee and the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership Governance Committee. The coordination has led to shared services between Head Start, child care and pre-K such as reflective coaching training, and the use of curriculum and assessment tools across sectors. The coordination with Head Start Collaboration Office has led to successful cross sector training, technical assistance and implementation of child care initiatives that impact Head Start and child care providers such as Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS and the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships.

State Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act.

Describe:

The Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE) has been designated as the lead agency in Alabama for the State Advisory Council under the Head Start Act of 2007. The work of the Alabama Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) targets children birth through age 5. The Council makes recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on how to effectively create a high-quality childhood system in order to improve the outcomes of Alabama's children and families. The Lead Agency is represented on the ECAC by the Lead

Agency Commissioner and the Director of the Child Care Service Division who is also the CCDF state administrator. Within the DECE agency are the Head Start Collaboration Office, the Office of School Readiness, which oversees State funded Pre-K sites, the First Teacher Home Visitation Program and the Children's Policy Council. The expected results of the coordination efforts is to bring existing early childhood services into an effective system that optimizes a child's healthy development and school readiness and guide the process of coordinating existing education and professional development systems for child care providers. This being accomplished through the aligning of standards for children birth through age 5, shared training and technical assistance, and aligning the use of curriculum and child assessment tools across all child care sectors (Head Start, Child Care and Pre-K).

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency is the state grantee for the Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships. The CCDF program is aligning eligibility policies with EHS-CCP to better meet the needs and streamline the eligibility process for families eligible and receiving services through both programs.

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

McKinney-Vento liaisons

Describe:

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) houses the McKinney-Vento State coordinators for Homeless Education. The coordination with ALSDE McKinney-Vento State Coordinator has led to training on Subsidy Program eligibility and services for city and county homeless liaisons. The coordination assisted in the development of priority eligibility policy for homeless families. The McKinney-Vento State coordinator is a member of the Child Care Coordinating Committee. The Child Care Coordinating Committee makes recommendations to the lead agency on the array of child care services offered by the lead agency.

Child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

The CCDF Lead Agency contracts with nonprofit community based agencies to administer Subsidy Program eligibility services and quality enhancement services. The Lead Agency's relationship with these local agencies has allowed for expansion of resources in the child care arena and allowed for blending of local, private and public funding to support child care initiatives.

State/Territory agency responsible for public education.

Describe:

The Lead Agency coordinates with the Alabama Department of Education to provide quality extended-day services for school age children through grants awarded to Local Education Agencies. Funds target rural areas and low-performing school sites. The coordination also includes serving on the Advisory Panel for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The panel reviews application and sets criteria for agencies applying for funding. The goal of this program and agency coordination is to integrate strategies that enhance the quality of care in extended-day child care settings and increase the availability of quality out of school programs.

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency coordinates with Alabama Community College System two-year colleges to provide scholarships for child care providers to obtain a credential, certificate, Associate and/or Bachelor degree through the T.E.A.C.H and Leadership in Child Care Scholarship (LICC) Programs. Through collaborative efforts of the Lead Agency, Quality Enhancement Agency and Community Colleges a child care resource library is housed at three community colleges. The library is partially staffed by Child Development and Early Care and Education students at the college.

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

Describe:

The lead agency shares information on legal operating status of child care programs with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP is notified when a new program open or opened or a program closes. The Lead Agency shares with CACFP information on licensed program suspensions and revocations.

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education is the agency responsible for the Maternal and Childhood Home Visitation program. The lead agency serves on the advisory board of the Alabama First Teacher Home Visitation program. Through the coordination a conference is conducted each year for home visiting and infant/toddler practitioners and professionals.

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

Describe:

State/Territory agency responsible for public health.

Describe:

The CCDF lead agency coordinates with the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) provide nurse health consultant services to child care providers through the Health Child Care Alabama program. Health Child Care Alabama program supports on-site visits by nurse health consults to child care centers, homes and related care providers and telephone consultation. The program links children, families and child care providers with community health resources and promotion of child health visits for primary health providers. The CCDF lead agency and ADPH coordinate to bring Care Coordination Services to families participating in the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership program.

State/Territory agency responsible for mental health.

Describe:

The CCDF lead agency serves on the State advisory committee for Project LAUNCH led by the Alabama Department of Mental Health through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Project LAUNCH promotes the wellness of young children from birth to eight years by addressing physical, social, emotional, cognitive and behavior aspects of their development. Through this coordination technical assistance, training, and mentoring is provided to implement screening and assessment tools and appropriate referrals in the child care settings. Through this coordination agencies are working to align the screening and assessments tools used in early care and education

settings.

State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe:

The Lead Agency is also the State agency for Child Welfare services. Program coordinated allows for Protective Service and Foster Care families to receive priority for services. Child Welfare staff provides training in child abuse and neglect detection and prevention to child care providers.

State/Territory liaison for military child care programs.

Describe:

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency is also the state agency for TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) services. CCDF services coordinate with the TANF unit to provide priority for care for children of families participating in the TANF JOBS (Job Opportunity and Basic Skills) program. Services are offered through a referral system thereby reducing the need for families to attend multiple interviews to assess eligibility.

State/Territory community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families

Describe:

Provider groups or associations.

Describe:

Provider groups and associations have active members on the Lead Agency Center and Family Home QRIS Steering Committees, the Child Care Coordinating Committee and the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program Governance Committee. The ongoing coordination provide knowledge of Lead Agency policy related to child care issue, allows ongoing input from the provider community into the provision of CCDF funded services and provides awareness and training on new child care initiatives implemented by the Lead Agency that can be shared with the associations at-large membership.

Worker organizations.

Describe:

Parent groups or organizations.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

## 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](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"

The lead agency defines "combine" as the layering of funding from different funding streams to allow for delivery of comprehensive, high quality child care services.

Which funds will you combine

The lead agency is combining CCDF and Early Head Start funds through the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership.

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

The purpose is to increase the level of quality for infants/toddler in partnering child care centers and ensure that comprehensive services are being provided to enrolled families.

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

Funding is allocated at the State level. The Lead Agency is the CCDF agency and the grantee for the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership.

How are the funds tracked and method of oversight

The funds are tracked through the Lead Agency finance division and monitoring is conducted by state level program specialists. The Department of Human Resources (DHR), the Lead Agency creates a contract and budget for each program partner agency. Contractual agreements are reviewed by Legal and Financial Accounting staff. Invoices for expenditures are submitted monthly and reviewed by a program specialist against budgets, verifying the number of children served and line item detail accuracy. The Program Specialist assigned the correct financial reporting code based on the type of expenditure. Invoices are submitted to the DHR Finance Division for additional review against budgets, contracts and financial reporting codes before payment is authorized. Incorrect invoices are returned for correction. Correct invoices are submitted to the State Comptroller office where additional audit and review is conducted. Monthly reports of expenditures are created from the accounting system general ledger to show total costs and program expenditures allocated to each program area and reporting code.

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 Lead Agency was awarded funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to strengthen the Alabama Quality STARS child care quality rating and improvement program by focusing on professional development, infant-toddler workforce initiatives, and a statewide consumer awareness campaign.

The Lead Agency collaborates with the Alabama Partnership for Children (APC), a private nonprofit agency, to fund the TEACH Early Childhood Program. This program, along with the Lead Agency's relationship with community colleges, has allowed for increased training and educational opportunities for providers.

An ongoing relationship with the Child Care Resource Center, Employer's Child Care Alliance promotes an increase in the number of corporate partners that support quality initiatives in child care.

Many of the local agencies funded by the Lead Agency to implement Quality initiatives are developing private partnerships to supplement funding for quality activities and to maintain sustainability of quality services. Partnerships have been formed by local agencies with private partners such as W.K. Kellogg Foundation, PNC Bank and United Way.

## 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:

Alabama contracts with community-based regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) to maximize the quality services for children, families in Alabama. QEAs services include:

- Training and technical assistance to child care providers utilizing resource libraries, provider networks, mentoring, on-site training, and distance learning.
- Professional development activities to assist child care providers in surpassing state minimum licensing standard, obtaining credentials, certificates or degrees and to encourage providers to operate their programs consistent with effective management skills and business practices.
- Consumer education to inform the public about quality child care and assist families in making informed child care choices.
- Recruitment and training for diverse child care populations

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) [Partially implemented](#)

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

[There are requirements within the state that address 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.](#)

[There are requirements within the state that child care providers have in place procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [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.](#)

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.)

[Review existing state requirements in statute and in licensing regulations related to disaster preparedness.](#)

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

Projected end date for each activity: [06/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [The Alabama Department of Human Resources - Office of Child Care Licensing and Office of Child Care Subsidy](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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.)

[Draft Subsidy Program policy for continued assistance during and emergency.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [05/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Child Care Subsidy](#)

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

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.)

[Consolidate existing requirements into a statewide disaster preparedness plan](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity [Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Child Care Subsidy](#)

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

Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education, Office of School Readiness State Pre-K, Head Start Collaboration Office, Alabama State Department of Education

## 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 lead agency maintains a waiting list of potentially eligible families. The lists are maintained regionally which allows the state to know where potential needs exist. The information is captured on the age of the children potentially eligible and the families. The list of potentially eligible children and families are maintained in the Subsidy Program eligibility computer system. The lists can be accessed county, region or statewide. Region and county information is accessible to Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers. County, region and statewide data is accessible by state level staff.

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.

The Lead Agency contracts with Child Care Management Agencies to provide eligibility services. These agencies also inform parents of the application process. Local County Departments of Human Resources (that are an extension of the lead agency) inform parent of the availability of services. Community-based Quality Enhancement Agencies helps the lead agency with outreach by providing information on the availability of services to child care providers. Licensing inspectors share information on the availability of services to child care providers who in turn inform parent in their programs.

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

The Lead Agency, the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) website contains program information, summary of eligibility requirements and an application with instructions on where to submit the application. The website contains a list of the Child Care Management eligibility agencies and their contact information including email. The Lead Agency has among its staff a program specialist who job duties includes responding to the public regarding availability of child care services. All documents, brochures and pamphlets issued by the DHR contain the website address. Child Care Management Agencies are required to give each applicant applying for child care services, a copy of the brochure *Choosing Child Care in Alabama - A Parent's Guide*. The brochure includes the agency's website address.

### 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:

Community-based Child Care Management Agencies conduct interviews and determine eligibility for services. Eligibility workers travel to locations within their catchment area to complete the in-person interview so that applicants are interviewed in their county of

residence.

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

[The lead agency provides the following information to child care providers and the 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 through the child care subsidy program, local assistance programs operating in some counties, the State's First Class Pre-K program, Head Start and Early Head Start programs.
- Quality of child care providers by providing information on the Alabama

- Quality STARS level and the national accreditation of providers,
- Other programs including 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, and,
- 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.

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.)

[Research policies and resources currently available in the state.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [4/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [5/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; Alabama Early Intervention Services; United Cerebral Palsy; Alabama Partnership for Children](#)

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.)

Develop expulsion and suspension policy for program serving CCDFfunded children that aligned with policy from other agencies serving preschool children.

Projected start date for each activity: 06/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 08/01/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; Alabama Early Intervention Services; United Cerebral Palsy; Alabama Partnership for Children; Child Care Management Agencies

**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 lead agency has developed a brochure, Choosing Child Care in Alabama, designed to assist parents in selecting child care arrangement that best suit the family situation and child's needs. Information is also on the lead agency website.

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

Through its contracting agencies the lead agency provides brochures on quality, information on how to select appropriate care that meets the individual child's needs, information that indicates the regulatory status of the facilities (licensed or exempt) and information on accreditation. Information provided on the agency website can be translated into multiple languages.

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

The lead agency partners with community-based Child Care Management Agencies and Quality Enhancement Agencies.

**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 lead agency contracts with community-based organizations Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) to provide information and consultation to parent, providers and the public about quality. QEAs provide workshop, facilitate community forums, maintain brochures and pamphlet about quality childcare, maintain lists that include services offered by providers. QEAs also respond to parents and the public's verbal request made through email and or phone calls.

Information is available on the lead agency website. Information includes a check-list for choosing child care and links to sites with information on developmentally appropriate practices.

The lead agency maintains a Child Care Intake line where parent, providers and the public can receive information about different types of child care programs (such as Pre-K, Head Start, accredited programs), the services offered by the programs, the difference between licensed and exempt child care, and how to choose quality child care. The The Child Care Intake line is staffed by Child Care Licensing Consultants.

Child Care Management Agency as part of their eligibility services provide parents with the brochure "Choosing Child Care in Alabama - A Parent's Guide" at each initial application and each time the parent changes child care providers.

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

The lead agency provides brochures on quality, information on how to select appropriate care that meets the individual child's needs, information that indicates the regulatory status of the facilities (licensed or exempt) and information on accreditation. Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) provide written materials and direct communications to parents and providers. QEAs also provide explanation of what accreditation, a list of accredited providers and information to help parents understand the importance of quality child care.

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

The lead agency partners with community-based Quality Enhancement Agencies, Child Care Management Agencies, and the Office of Child Care Licensing to make the information available to parents, providers and the public.

#### **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)**

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency (CMA) eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA), through the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line and the lead agency website. The lead agency publishes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US". The brochure has a summary of information and eligibility criteria for the TANF program and information on how to contact the agency.

"QEAs maintain brochures about TANF services in resource areas that are accessible by parents, providers and the public.

CMAs provide direct consultation to parents during the eligibility process and are required to share the "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" brochure with parents. In many regions, CMAs are co-housed with the TANF agency thereby streamlining the process of sharing information.

##### **b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs**

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency (CMA) eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA), and the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line and the lead agency website.

QEA agencies provide information through direct consultation is provided to parents and public. Resource and Referral lists have indicators to allow the staff to determine which program have Head Start/Early Head Start services so that the information can be shared with parents and the public. Information is provided to child care providers to connect Head

Start/Early Head Start and child care providers for partnership opportunities.

CMAs provide information during the eligibility process for parents looking for comprehensive service options for their child care needs. Information on Head Start/Early Head Start is shared with parents who are on the waiting list for CCDF funded child care.

The lead agency website has a listing of all center child care providers including Head Start/Early Head Start providers.

c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency (CMAs) eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs), and the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line.

QEAs provide written information in resource areas and direct consultation is provided to parents and the public based on expressed need.

CMAs, during the eligibility process, provide contact information for local agencies operating the LIHEAP program based on needs expressed by the parent. The United Way Agency maintains the 2-1-1 Connects Alabama referral system. 2-1-1 Connects Alabama is an easy number to remember and dial for information on health and human services organization in the community. In local areas without direct access to the LIHEAP agency, the CMA directs individuals to 2-1-1 Connect Alabama to obtain the information.

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

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies, the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line and website. The lead agency publishes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US". The brochure has a summary of information and eligibility criteria for the SNAP program and information on how to contact the agency.

"QEAs maintain information about SNAP services in resource areas that are accessible by parents, providers and the public.

CMAs provide direct consultation to parents during the eligibility process and are required to share the "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" brochure with parents. In many Counties, CMAs are co-housed in the local Department of Human Resources with the SNAP agency thereby streamlining the process of sharing information. CMAs also direct individuals to the lead agency website where there is summary of eligibility criteria for the SNAP program and a link to the on-line application site.

The Child Care Intake line, staffed by a Child Care Division licensing staff, informs parents

about the SNAP program and gives out contact information, connects the caller directly with the agency and/or refers the caller to the lead agency website for the online application.

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

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies, the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line, and the lead agency website. These contact points direct parents to the Alabama Department of Public Health website or to local Departments of Public Health that are located in each County. The United Way Agency maintains the 2-1-1 Connects Alabama referral system. 2-1-1 Connects Alabama is an easy number to remember and dial for information on health and human services organization in the community. Child Care Management Agencies, Quality Enhancement Agencies and the child care intake line direct parents to the 2-1-1 Connect Alabama to obtain the information on the WIC program.

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency (CMAs) eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs), the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line, and the lead agency website.

QEAs provide brochures and other written information resource areas. CMAs give direct consultation to parents during the eligibility process. Information is shared on the different options at child care programs, schools and summer feeding sites.

g) Medicaid

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers and the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line. The lead agency publishes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US". The brochure has a summary of information and eligibility criteria for the Medicaid program and information on how to contact the agency.

CMAs provide direct consultation to parents during the eligibility process and are required to share the "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" brochure with parents. CMAs can also give information on where to locate Medicaid services in the parent's local region. The Child Care Intake line staff maintain a list of resource services including information for contacting the Medicaid Program. Information shared includes the phone number and website address.

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, the Lead

Agency Child Care Intake line, and the lead agency website. The lead agency publishes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US". The brochure has a summary of information about the Children's Health Insurance Program and information on how to contact the agency.

CMAAs provide direct consultation to parents during the eligibility process and are required to share the "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" brochure with parents.

The Office of Child Care Licensing provides brochures on the CHIP in communications with child care providers who can share this information with their parents and staff or keep copies in their parent resource areas.

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies, and the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line.

The United Cerebral Palsy, Child Care Enhancement with a Purpose initiatives works with parents through their chosen child care providers to learn about the resources in their area. All DHR programs are Brochures and other written information is provided in resource areas and direct consultation is provided to parents during the eligibility process and at Quality Enhancement Agencies.

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

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies, the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line, and the lead agency website. Brochures and other written information is provided in resource areas and direct consultation is provided to parents during the eligibility process and at Quality Enhancement Agencies.

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

Information is shared by the Child Care Management Agency eligibility workers, Quality Enhancement Agencies, the Lead Agency Child Care Intake line, and the lead agency website. Brochures and other written information is provided in resource areas and direct consultation is provided to parents during the eligibility process and at Quality Enhancement Agencies.

## **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)**

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach includes community or parent newsletters and/or brochures provided in resource libraries. The QEA provides listing of local agency resources including the County Department of Human Resources which administers the TANF program locally. The lead agency includes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" in licensing application packets. The brochure includes information on all lead agency services including the TANF program. Providers can share the information with families through their family resource area.

### **b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs**

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. QEA conduct outreach through shared trainings opportunities, community awareness programs.

The lead agency Office of Licensing shares information through information mailed to providers with their licensing applications.

### **c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**

As a condition of the contract with Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach include providing information on the 2-1-1 Connect Alabama referral system. The 2-1-1 Connect Alabama is an easy number to dial for information on health and human services organizations.

Community Action Agencies that administer the LIHEAP programs are included in the list of services. In training on family engagement QEAs inform provider of resources local

resources that may be of interest to families.

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

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach includes community or parent newsletters and/or brochures provided in resource libraries. The QEA provides listing of local agency resources including the County Department of Human Resources which administers the SNAP program locally. The lead agency includes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" in licensing application packets. The brochure includes information on all lead agency services including the SNAP program. Providers can share the information with families through their family resource area.

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

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach include providing information on the 2-1-1 Connect Alabama referral system. The 2-1-1 Connect Alabama is an easy number to dial for information on health and human services organizations. Community family resource centers also share information with providers. Quality Enhancement Agencies also refer child care programs to local County Health Departments.

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP)

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. QEA maintain information on the CACFP program at the state level and the local sponsor program. QEAs also assist providers with understanding information that may be needed for families to access the program through schools as well as information to assist the child care program to maintain eligibility with the CACFP.

The Alabama Department of Education is the agency for CACFP and does outreach and training with child care providers. The lead agency supplies a list of newly operating child care programs to CACFP.

g) Medicaid

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach includes community or parent newsletters and/or brochures.

The lead agency includes the brochure "Putting it Together FOR THOSE WHO NEED US" in licensing application packets. The brochure includes information other state agency services including the Medicaid program. Providers can share the information with families through their family resource area.

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach includes community or parent newsletters and/or brochures.

The lead agency includes the information on the Children's Health Insurance Program in the licensing application packet mailed to providers.

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

As a condition of the lead agency contract with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies information is shared with providers so that providers can link families to other programs. Outreach includes community or parent newsletters and/or brochures. QEAs provide inclusion training to child care programs which includes information on the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Through the partnership with Alabama Department of Public Health and United Cerebral Palsy providers are informed about IDEA and how to connect families to resources and services.

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

Regional Quality Enhancement Agencies shared information on the State's First Class Pre-K program in newsletters including information on the annual conference, shared training opportunities and annual grant application process.

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

Providers are notified of the [programs through participation in the annual Home Visiting Conference and Infant/Toddler Academy. Providers are informed of the program through shared training opportunities provided by Quality Enhancement Agencies.

**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

The lead agency through agreements with regional Quality Enhancement Agencies and Child Care Management Agencies provides written materials to parents, providers and the general public. Child Care Management Agencies provide brochures and information on how to select quality child care, parenting tips and referral to Quality Enhancement Agencies for more detail services. Quality Enhancement Agencies provide community or parent newsletters and/or brochures, community awareness programs, child development materials, presentations to community groups, information on how to recognize and choose high quality child care; and parenting tips and support on balancing work and family life, health and safety, the value of play, the importance of early learning and early brain development.

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

The lead agency through contracts and agreement with partnering agencies provides written material (brochures, pamphlet) direct communication through presentations to community groups and contact with parents, training and technical assistance to child care providers on the importance of early learning and early brain development.

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

The lead agency partners, through contract with Child Care Management Agencies, Regional Quality Enhancement Agencies, United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley, and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

**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

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) includes domains on self-concept/emotional development and social development. The AELG is available for parents on request and through the lead agency website.

ii. Providers

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) Credential training includes training on the self-concept/emotional development and social development domains included in the AELG. Quality Enhancement Agencies include positive behavioral interventions in their training and technical assistance outreach to child care providers. The lead agency's agreement with United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley promotes the inclusion of healthy social and emotional development and resilience in the child care setting.

iii. General public

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) includes domains on self-concept/emotional development and social development. The AELG is available to the public on request and through the lead agency website.

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

Regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (Private and Public non-profit community and state agencies) provide training, technical assistance to providers, and provide consumer education and resource and referral to parents and the general public regarding social-

emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health. In addition, the United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley - *Quality Enhancement with a Purpose* initiative and Alabama Department of Public Health - *Healthy Childcare Alabama* (nurse health consultants) provide services that foster positive social and emotional development of children. Through a partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health, *Building a Health Start* (Professional Development for Caregivers of Infants and Toddlers Project) a training module on promoting Optimal Social-Emotional Development of Infants and Toddlers was developed. The module is utilized by regional Quality Enhancement Agencies in trainings with child care providers that serve infants and toddlers.

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) [Substantially implemented](#)

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

applicable

A developmental checklist that can be used by parents or providers is included as a resource in the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines booklet.

Through the lead agency's agreement with Alabama Department of Public Health and United Cerebral Palsy of the Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley training and technical assistance is provided to child care providers on the resources available to obtain developmental screenings, recognizing children at risk of developmental delays, and referral of children potentially eligible for Alabama's Early Intervention System.

Quality Enhancement agencies train child care providers in the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Developmental Checklist included in the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines credential training.

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.)

Establish policy for the CCDF program to incorporate existing practices.

Projected start date for each activity: 04/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 06/15/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Potential partners include Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; Alabama Department of

Rehabilitation -Early Intervention Services, Alabama State Department of Education

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.)

Establish definitions, timelines, and implementation strategy.

Projected start date for each activity: 07/15/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 08/15/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Potential partners include Alabama Department of Public Health, United Cerebral Palsy, Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; Alabama Department of Rehabilitation -Early Intervention Services, Alabama State Department of Education

**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

Substantiated complaints are complaints that are shown to be true after investigation by a licensing consultant with the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

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)

Records of substantiated complaints are maintained, in electronic format, in the lead agency licensing database. Current records are maintained for 6 years.

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

The lead agency maintains a toll-free Child Care Intake line, staffed by child care licensing consultants. The public may request substantiated complaints on any licensed programs by

contacting the Intake line. Verbal and written requests are accepted for investigation. The requestor is informed of the nature of the substantiated complaint and the timeframe that the incident occurred.

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

Complaints from others are defined and maintained in the same manner 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

Language line translation services

- 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

The lead agency has the ability to have translation/interpretation in all primary and secondary

languages.

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

All persons with a disability have the option to receive additional supports through the State Department of Human Resources, the local County Department of Human Resources or the local Child Care Management Agency office. Each office maintains a list of service providers to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the all services offered by the lead agency.

## **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) [9/30/2016](#)

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 Minimum Standards for centers and the Minimum Standards for day care Homes (which contains the health and safety requirements and licensing or regulatory requirements for child care providers) and a description of the processes for licensing, background checks and offenses that prevent individuals from being providers is on the lead agency website at

[http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/Licensing\\_Overview.aspx](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/Licensing_Overview.aspx).

The website is accessible in multiple languages. All information on the website can be translated into different languages by clicking on the translation option at the bottom of the web page.

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.)

Establish technical requirements for importing data from the Child Care Management System - Licensing Module into the website.

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

Projected end date for each activity: 06/15/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division

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.)

Redesign the format of the existing screen that contain provider search information to include fields for date of last inspection and any licensing violations.

Projected start date for each activity: 06/16/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 07/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division](#)

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.)

[Conduct user acceptance testing, correct any deficiencies on the site and implement into production.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Information Services Division](#)

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.)

[Establish protocol for obtaining data from the Child Protective Services Division, on a monthly basis, indicating the number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Family Services Division](#)

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.)

[Post the information along with other child care statistical information on the Child Care Services section of the Alabama Department of Human Resources website.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources - Family Services Division](#)

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.)

[Develop definitions of terms and acronyms and develop frequently asked questions for parents and providers that will be posted on the website.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Develop requirements to import monitoring inspections results from the Child Care Management System, Licensing Module to the website.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division](#)

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.)

[Conduct user acceptance testing and implement website enhancements into the production site.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

### [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 0 (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: Incapacity (or incapacitated) means a physical or mental condition which, based on the conclusions of a licensed physician, psychiatrist or psychologist, renders a parent incapable of providing adequate care for a child or, in the case of a child, incapable of caring for himself or herself. (Receipt of VA disability or SSI does not in and of itself constitute incapacity.)

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 (may not equal or exceed age 19)

No.

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

a) residing with -

The child must reside on a permanent basis with a parent who is a resident of the State of Alabama, meaning the parent is in the state voluntarily with the intention of making Alabama his or her home. Temporary absence from Alabama does not interrupt a parent's residency status, provided the parent's stated intent is to return to Alabama and the absence is not expected to exceed 30 consecutive days.

b) in loco parentis -

Adult relatives without legal custody or guardianship of the child; foster parents of a child in the legal custody of the Department; and, adults with whom the Department places a child for Protective Service reasons.

### 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:

Employment for a minimum average of 15 hours per week (either alone or in combination with a job training or educational program) in any legally operating place of business from

which the parent receives wages, salaries, commissions and tips equal to, or greater than, the federal minimum wage.

\* attending job training

Enrolled in, attending and satisfactorily participating in a job training or educational program, either alone or in combination with gainful employment, for a minimum average of 15 hours per week. (Students enrolled full-time in an educational program, in accordance with the institution's definition of full-time are deemed to meet this requirement.)

\* attending education

Enrolled in, attending and satisfactorily participating in a job training or educational program, either alone or in combination with gainful employment, for a minimum average of 15 hours per week. (Students enrolled full-time in an educational program, in accordance with the institution's definition of full-time, are deemed to meet this requirement.)

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 -

Services provided to, or on behalf of, children in response to reports of alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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 -

Income is defined as the total gross monthly income of all family members.

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

Income eligibility limits are statewide. No jurisdictions set their own limits.

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

| Family Size | (a)<br>100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) | (b)<br>85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)<br>[Multiply (a) by 0.85] | (c)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Entry" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (d)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI<br>[Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]<br>Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (e)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Exit" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (f)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI<br>[Divide (e) by (a), multiply by 100]<br>Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI |
|-------------|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| 1           | \$2,871   | \$2,440  | \$1,275  | 52%   | \$1,471   | 60%   |

| Family Size | (a)<br>100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) | (b)<br>85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)<br>[Multiply (a) by 0.85] | (c)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Entry" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (d)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI<br>[Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]<br>Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (e)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) \$/month Maximum "Exit" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI | (f)<br>(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI<br>[Divide (e) by (a), multiply by 100]<br>Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI |
|-------------|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| 2           | \$3,754   | \$3,191  | \$1,726  | 54%   | \$1,991   | 62%   |
| 3           | \$4,638   | \$3,942  | \$2,176  | 55%   | \$2,511   | 64%   |
| 4           | \$5,521   | \$4,693  | \$2,627  | 56%   | \$3,031   | 65%   |
| 5           | \$6,404   | \$5,444  | \$3,078  | 57%   | \$3,551   | 65%   |

**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 [Year 2016; Source: LIHEAP](#)

d) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on: [October 1, 2015](#)

e) Provide the link to the income eligibility limits

[http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/documents/DHRCMA1972FactSheet.pdf](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/documents/DHRCMA1972FactSheet.pdf)

### 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

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) [09/30/2016](#)

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) [Substantially implemented](#)

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

[The Lead Agency has a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased at the time of re-determination, but the current upper level is below 85% of SMI.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [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.](#)

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.)

[Design requirements forenhancement to eligibility data system to allow for continued eligibility up to 85% of SMI.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [04/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division](#)

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.)

[Enter enhanced income eligibility in the database tables and conduct user acceptance testing.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Information Services Division](#)  
[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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.)

[Conduct training on revised policy with Child Care Management Agencies](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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.)

[Post updated eligibility requirements to the website.](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Communications](#)

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.)

[Implement graduated phase-out of assistance for families](#)

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

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

### **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

The lead agency averages weekly income for the four preceding weeks and averages monthly income for the three preceding months (if applicable). Irregular income is defined as income received irregularly or in irregular amounts. Monthly income is determined by calculating the total countable income received during the three months prior to the month during which eligibility is being determined and dividing the total by three. [Policy Citation: Child Care Subsidy Program Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 8, Section 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.](#)

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

### 3.1.7 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:

Documentation includes driver's license, work ID, birth certificate, School ID, non-drivers ID, and government issued IDs. Documentation is required at initial eligibility.

Applicant's relationship to the child.

Describe:

Documentation includes birth certificates, paternity affidavits, court documents, school records, other federal/state agency records. Required at initial eligibility.

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

Describe:

Documentation includes birth certificate, paternity affidavits, court documents, school records, other federal/state agency records.

Work.

Describe:

Includes documentation from the employer in form of pay receipts or written statement from the employer. Required at initial eligibility and redetermination of eligibility.

Job Training or Educational Program.

Describe:

Documentation from the education institution or job training agency. Required at initial eligibility and redetermination of eligibility.

Family Income.

Describe:

Includes documentation from the employer in form of pay receipts or written statement from the employer, written documentation from the entity from which the income is received. Required at initial eligibility and redetermination of eligibility.

Household composition.

Describe:

Applicant Residence.

Describe:

Documentation includes rent or lease agreement, mortgage agreement, utility receipts, other state or federal agency records. Required at initial application, redetermination, and when the applicant's residence changes.

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 :

Initial applications must be approved or denied within 30 days of the application date.

Continuing eligibility must be approved or denied no later than the last working day of the current eligibility period. Caseworkers must process information received from families within three (3) days of receipt of the information.

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 [Alabama Department of Human Resources](#)

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

"appropriate child care":

Any legally operating child care provider 19 years old or older. In addition, state law requires an individual to be licensed if the individual provides care for children who are unrelated to the individual, in the individual's own home for more than four hours per day (iDHR, JPPM, section 610-A8).

"reasonable distance":

The distance from the home to the place of employment is unreasonable considering the expected wage and the time and cost of commuting. Employment is not considered suitable if daily commuting time exceeds two hours (iDHR, JPPM, section 505-C1g). The timeframe authorized for care may include any time affiliated with the client's participation, such as travel time, including reasonable travel to and from a child care facility (iDHR, JPPM, section 610-B5).

"unsuitability of informal child care":

Informal child care is care legally provided in the child's home by either a relative or non-relative or care provided out of the child's home by a relative or a license-exempted non-relative (iDHR, JPPM section 610-A6f). TANF policy does not allow payment for childcare if the individual providing the care is unrelated to the child, is not licensed, and keeps the child more than four hours per day. The individual is considered unrelated if the individual is not related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption as follows: parent, grandparent, sibling (step or half), uncle, aunt, and spouses of these. Verify relationship only if questionable. In addition, due to wage and hour laws and DHR maximum payment restrictions, no in-home care (meaning the home of the child, but not the provider) may be authorized for less than minimum wage (iDHR, JPPM, section 610-A8).

"affordable child care arrangements":

In determining whether or not appropriate childcare is available, the CM (case manager) should first ask the client if s/he is able to arrange her/his own childcare at no cost. Find out who currently provides back-up childcare when needed, whether the arrangements meet the conditions for legally provided care, and the amount charged by the individual providing the care. Then determine based on the client's statement of her/his situation if

that individual is both able and willing to provide childcare to enable the client to work and/or participate in JOBS (Job Opportunity and Basic Skills) activities, and if the care meets the guidelines for legal care. If so, authorize and ensure payment as appropriate. If the back-up childcare arrangement is not legal or the individual is unable to unwilling to provide the care on a regular basis, the CM must work with the client to find other means of obtaining legal childcare services. This must be done before requiring the client to participate in any activity for which the care is needed, including job search (iDHR, JPPM, section 610-B1b). The final decision as to which type of care will best meet her/his needs and the needs of each child rests with the client. However, the client may not use policy regarding parental choice to circumvent JOBS participation requirements. The client must choose from the resources that are available if the resources are appropriate, accessible, and affordable. For example, if appropriate legal childcare services are otherwise available (affordable and accessible) to the client, s/he may not, without good cause, be deferred from participation just because s/he would prefer a different arrangement (iDHR, JPPM section 610-B3b).

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:

JOBS Program Policy Manual (JPPM), Section 505-C1g, Section 610-A8, Section 610-B1b, Section 610-B1b, Section 610-B3b, Section 610-B5.

**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 with special needs is defined as child(ren) who is receiving protective services or foster care services from the Department and who has been determined the Department to need child care services.

and describe how services are prioritized:

Children receive priority for services over other CCDF eligible children and are not subject to the waiting list.

b. Provide definition of "Families with very low incomes": Families with very low income is defined a families with income at or below 30% of the federal poverty level.

and describe how services are prioritized:

The co-payment is waived for these families with income at or below 30% of the FPL. Co-payment is waived for all families with income at or below 30% of the FPL.

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) Families receiving TANF and participating in the JOBS (Job Opportunity and Basic Skills) program, and families who have received TANF within the past 6 months receive priority for care over other CCDF eligible families. The families are not subject to the waiting list.

### 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) [Partially implemented](#)

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

[The lead agency is implementing policy effective for June 1, 2016 to prioritize services to homeless families. Homeless families will receive priority over other CCDF eligible families. The lead agency is conducting outreach to homeless families by providing information on the program to the Homeless Liaisons across the state. The lead agency met with City and County Homeless Liaisons in March and April. The lead agency has added the State Homeless Coordinator to the Child Care Coordinating Committee. The Child Care Coordinating Committee meets provides recommendation to the lead agency on child care services and policy.](#)

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.)

Conduct outreach and gather input from McKinney-Vento State coordinators for Homeless Education

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

Projected end date for each activity: 03/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

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.)

Research policy definitions for homeless from other agencies within the state

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

Projected end date for each activity: 03/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; Alabama State Department of Education; Alabama Department of Human Resources, Food Assistance Division, Alabama Department of Human Resources Family Assistance Division

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.)

Develop policy for homeless families

Projected start date for each activity: 04/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 04/30/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

## Child Care Management Agencies

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.)

[Implement policy for priority access to services for homeless families](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [05/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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.)

[Convene stakeholders to determine training and technical assistance strategies](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [04/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [04/15/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement training requirements in vendor procurement and selection process](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [05/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [05/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Select vendors to conduct training and technical assistance](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [06/30/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Obtain legislative approval for vendors](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

## Implement training and technical assistance for providers

Projected start date for each activity: 09/15/2016

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Quality Enhancement Agencies

## 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  
[Temporary changes in work, education or training are changes that are expected to last 90 days or less and include maternity leave, temporary lay-off, school breaks, illness of the parent or child, or seasonal break in employment are not subject to termination\(Child Care Subsidy Program Policies and Procedures Manual - Chapter 4, Section 7 and Section 8\).](#)

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

[A non-temporary loss of job is a permanent loss of employment due to the parent's employer action to terminate employment or parents action to terminate the employment.](#)

[A non-temporary cessation of education or training occurs when the parent is no longer participating in an allowable education or training activity due to the education/training institutions action to terminate enrollment, the parents actions to terminate enrollment, completion of the education/training activity or the end of the customary timeframe for](#)

completion of the education/training and the parent is not otherwise participating in an allowable activity.

(Child Care Subsidy Program Policies and Manual - Chapter 4, Section 6; Appendix A).

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

The lead agency aligns eligibility redetermination for TANF families with the TANF program. The lead agency accepts as verified information received by the TANF, Foster Care, and Protective Service programs and the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program. A

referral from the County Departments or Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership Program is sufficient to authorize care. The lead agency allows for application by phone or mail. (Child Care Subsidy Programs Policies and Procedures Manual - Chapter 3 and Chapter 5).

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)<br>Lowest "Entry" Income Level Where Copayment First Applied | (b)<br>What is the monthly copayment for a family of this size upon initial entry into CCDF? | (c)<br>What is the percent of income for (b)? | (d)<br>Maximum Highest "Entry" Income Level Before No Longer Eligible | (e)<br>What is the monthly copayment for a family of this size upon initial entry into CCDF? | (f)<br>What is the percent of income for (e)? |
|-------------|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| 1           | NA   | NA   | NA  | NA  | NA   | NA  |
| 2           | 398  | 35   | 9%  | \$1726  | \$100  | 6%  |
| 3           | \$502  | \$35   | 7%  | \$2176  | \$100  | 5%  |
| 4           | \$606  | \$35   | 6%  | \$2627  | \$100  | 4%  |
| 5           | \$710  | \$35   | 5%  | \$3078  | \$100  | 3%  |

a) What is the effective date of the sliding fee scale(s)? **October 1, 2015**

b) Provide the link to the sliding fee scale

[http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/documents/DHRCMA1972FactSheet.pdf](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/documents/DHRCMA1972FactSheet.pdf)

**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 \$495.00

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:

The maximum copay is limited to 10% or less of family income per child.

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:

Initial eligibility income must be at or below 130% of the FPL. Parents can continue eligibility until income exceeds 150% of the FPL.

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))**

The caseworker gives an explanation of the certificate process whenever the parent requests to change providers. Also information is found on the Parent Agreement and the Parental Choice form that is provided at each eligibility determination. The parental choice form is issued when the parent notifies the case manager of a change in 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

Parents who have not chosen a provider are issued a certificate to choose from among

legally operating providers. The parent is allowed up to 10 days to make a choice of provider. Additional time is granted on a case-by-case basis when requested by the parent. Some Child Care Management Agencies are also the agency for Quality Enhancement services thereby allowing parents access to full resource and referral and eligibility services in one location.

#### 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:

Beginning October 2016, the lead agency will offer contracts to Alabama Quality STARS, STAR 5 rated child care center programs and offer contracts for child care providers to serve children with diagnosed disabilities.

**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 lead agency has a statement on the provider agreement that requires the provider to certify that parents will have unrestricted access to their children. This signed agreement is renewed with the provider annually.

**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:

Restricted based on provider meeting a minimum age requirement

Describe:

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

Describe:

Restricted to care by relatives

Describe:

Care provided in the child homes is restricted to care provided by an individual who is related to the child by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption and includes the following relationships: grandparent, sibling, uncle, aunt, and their spouses.

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:

Other

Describe:

The in-home care provider and parent must sign a statement certifying that they are meeting requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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:

The Market Rate Survey was conducted and completed in August 2014. A Market Rate survey was also conducted in 2013. After the 2013 survey the document was shared with the Child Care Coordinating Committee to give recommendations for the 2014 survey. The Child Care Coordinating Committee is a 30 member organization with representation from the states Tribal agency, center and family home providers, local quality enhancement agency representative that provide child care resource and referral services, 4-year and community college representatives, Public Health, Early Intervention, provider associations, family advocacy groups, the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education which houses the State Advisory Council operating as the Children's Policy Council. The committee advised the lead agency on the length of the survey, the structuring of rate questions so the questions reflected general rate setting procedures of Alabama providers, the method of notifying providers using electronic as well mail notification, allowing providers to complete the survey electronically as well as through the mail. The Committee stressed the need for follow-up contact with providers that did not complete the survey after the initial contact.

#### **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 Market Rate survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with Auburn Montgomery Outreach for use in collecting 2014 market rate data from the state's 3,022 formal child care providers. Minor modifications were made to the questionnaire from the one used in the market rate survey conducted in 2013. Consequently, pre-testing of the data

collection instrument was limited to internal review by the survey consultants, as previous assessments had confirmed the validity of the questionnaire. The modification were to add a separate question for entering monthly rates. A text box was added to allow providers to give further explanation of the published rates. The questionnaire was designed to supply all information that was critical to evaluating the current cost of child care across the state for various categories of providers, but at the same time, it needed to be concise enough so that it would not seriously impact the time constraints or patience of those completing the questionnaires. The Lead Agency maintains a database that includes information on family and group daycare homes, licensed centers and exempt from licensure facilities. A mailing list of all 3,022 facilities appearing on this database was prepared and a paper copy of the questionnaire was mailed to each facility. The first wave of the survey was sent out on July 9, 2014. The questionnaire was accompanied by a return envelope that was self-addressed and stamped, along with a message from the Commissioner of the lead agency urging providers to complete the survey and stressing the importance of a timely response. Potential respondents were also given an option to complete the market rate survey online by visiting the lead agency website. Informational notices about the survey were sent to all Child Care Management Agencies and Quality Enhancement Agencies to improve the survey response rate.

A second wave of the survey was sent out on August 7, 2014. The multiple wave research design was intended to maximize the number of providers completing the questionnaire. Data from the questionnaires received by mail were entered into an online system similar to the one that was used for online surveys. The data were then downloaded into an excel spreadsheet for cleaning and appropriate coding. The final data were analyzed using the SAS software.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the type of child care facility that they operated (day care center, family day care home, group day care home, etc.) and the weekly and monthly charges for their child care services. Types of child care facilities were further classified into licensed and exempt facilities. The methodology resulted in a 65% return rate.

#### **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 survey reflects variation in price of care statewide and by region.

b) Type of provider:

The provider types included in the survey were licensed and exempt child care center program and licensed family day care homes and group day care homes.

c) Age of child:

Rates were obtained for care level (Infant/toddler, preschool and school-age care).

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

The survey examined any variations among licensed and license-exempt care and region of the state.

#### **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)

08/31/2014

b) Date report containing results were made widely available, no less than 30 days after the completion of the report 02/01/2015

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

The summary of the results of the report was shared with lead agency advisory groups, at meetings and at conferences. Results were shared with advocacy groups collecting data on the Results were The report is posted on the lead agency website.

[http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/documents/DHR\\_Report\\_2015-01-26%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/documents/DHR_Report_2015-01-26%20-%20FINAL.pdf).

### 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  
[No jurisdictions set their rates. Payment rates are set by the lead agency.](#)

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

Rate \$ [117](#) per [weekly](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [46th](#)

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

Rate \$ [99](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [22](#)

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

Rate \$ [117](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [46](#)

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

Rate \$ [99](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [46](#)

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

Rate \$ [107](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [44](#)

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

Rate \$ [95](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [17](#)

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

Rate \$ [99](#) per [week](#) unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: [55](#)

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

Rate \$ 90 per week unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile: 17

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

Full-time is defined as care provided for more than 25 hours per week.

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

k) Provide the link to the payment rates :

[http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child\\_Care\\_Services/documents/2016ProviderRates.pdf](http://dhr.alabama.gov/services/Child_Care_Services/documents/2016ProviderRates.pdf)

**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 for centers that are at STAR 4 and STAR 5 of the Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS.

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

Tiered rate above the base rate for licensed programs.

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:

Current rates percentile are reflective of the 2014 Market Rate Survey results. Rates for licensed care is set at 5% above the base of the 2014 Market Survey.

#### **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:

The lead agency will provide tiered payment allowing for payment rates above the base rate for licensed programs and programs operating at Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS STAR 4 and STAR 5 levels.

#### 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:

The difference between the payment rates for licensed care and the 75th percentile for licensed care averages from \$19 to \$33 based on the geographical regions where care is provided.

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:

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:

Feedback from parents, including parent survey or parent complaints.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

#### **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

The 2014 Market Rate Survey data indicates that DHR provider subsidies for child care costs are within \$31 or less of the average market rate for all age groups of children and for all categories of providers (day care centers, family day care homes, and group day care homes) in all nine Child Care Management regions.

Tiered rates effective for October 1, 2016 for licensed/regulated care are within \$26 or less of the average market rate; the rate for STAR 4 programs is within \$20 or less of the average

market rate the rate for STAR 5 programs is within \$18 or less of the average market rate for STAR 5 programs.

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

## 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:

Providers do not submit a bill for services. Parents record attendance using a swipe card. The attendance for the week is captured in the Time and Attendance System database and payment is calculated based on the child's authorization information. Direct Deposit is made to child care providers bank account within 21 days of the week child care services was provided. Child care providers receive weekly direct deposits.

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

Payment is authorized for up to 5 absences, whether or not consecutive, within a month.  
Payment is authorized for up to 10 absences due to the illness of the child when documented by a statement from a licensed physician, psychiatrist or psychologist.

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

Describe:

Full-time payment is authorized when the parent is participating in an activity for more than 25 hours per week. Part-time payment authorized when the parent is participating in an activity for 25 hours or less each week.

- 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:

Communication Notice is sent to notify providers of changes in eligibility that impacts payment. Notices are sent to providers in the same timeframe that notices are sent to parents - within 10 days of the effective date of the action.

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

Describe:

Providers may request a review of payment and adjustment for inaccuracies in payment up to 30 days after the direct deposit date. A request for review is submitted to the lead agency for review by a payment Adjustment Analyst.

- Other.

Describe:

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

There are significant variations in the payment practices of child care providers related to fees charged to parents. State audit procedures do not allow for prospective payments in advance of services provided.

#### 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:

Payments are direct deposited within 21 days of the week services were provided.

Track and monitor the payment process

Describe:

The lead agency payment database allows state level staff and eligibility staff to track the payment amount and date deposited. Payments can be tracked at the provider and child level. The database also allows the lead agency and eligibility staff to track the accuracy of the payment based on the child's enrollment.

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

Describe:

Payments are made through weekly direct deposits.

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

Licensing capacity numbers indicate a decline in the number of available infant/toddler slots and availability of care that targets the needs of children with disabilities. Therefore the lead agency will utilize contract slot to address these needs beginning October 2016.

No.

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

Beginning October 2016 the lead agency will use contracts slots for programs at STAR 5 in the Alabama Quality STARS to increase slots for infant 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

Beginning October 2016 the lead agency will use contracted slots for programs at STAR 5 in the Alabama Quality STARS to increase slots for children with disabilities.

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

Areas with high concentrations of poverty and unemployment have difficulty sustaining high quality child care services due to cost and parent ability to pay. The CCDF Lead Agency will increase child care assistance rates to licensed providers and providers with

an Alabama Quality STARS rating of STAR 4 and STAR 5 to help sustain high quality programs in those areas. The lead agency has implemented Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) program in areas with high poverty and unemployment areas. Parents participating in the EHS-CCP programs receive priority for subsidized 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)

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)(I)(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

[Licensed Centers -child care facility licensed that receives more than 12 children for more](#)

than four hours a day with or without stated educational purposes.

Group Day Care Home - A child care facility which is a family home and which received at least seven but no more than twelve children for care during part of the day and at least two adults are present.

Family Day Care Home - A child care facility which is a family home and which receives not more than six children for care during the day.

### 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

The following programs are exempt from licensing:

Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs operated by public elementary systems or secondary level school units or institutions of higher learning. Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs, with or without stated educational purposes, operating no more than four hours a day and receiving children younger than lawful school age. Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs operated as a part of a private school and receiving children younger than lawful school age for four hours a day or less, with or without stated educational purposes. Facilities operated for more than four hours a day in connection with a shopping center or service or other similar facility, where transient children are cared for temporarily while parents or custodians of the children are occupied on the premises or are in the immediate vicinity and readily available. The facilities shall meet local and state fire and health requirements. Any type of day care center that is conducted on federal government premises. Special activities programs for children of lawful school age including, but not limited to, athletics, crafts instruction and similar activities conducted on an organized and periodic basis by civic, charitable and governmental organizations provided local and state fire and health requirements are met. Preschool programs which are an integral part of a local church ministry or a religious nonprofit elementary school,

and are so recognized in the church or school's documents.

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) [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

[Appropriate child to staff ratios are implemented for licensed programs.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [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.](#)

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.)

## Convene stakeholders for input and recommendations on group size

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

Projected end date for each activity: 03/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division.](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

### [Develop group size standards](#)

Projected start date for each activity: 04/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 05/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

[Child Care Coordinating Committee](#)

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.)

### [Train staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: 06/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 07/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Notify providers of new standards](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement group size](#)

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

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

**[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:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed child care defines infant as birth to 18 months.

- Ratio:

The state Minimum Standards ratio for infants is 1:5.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

## 2. Toddler

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed child care defines toddler as age 18 months to 36 months.

- Ratio:

The state Minimum Standards ratio for toddlers is 1:7 for age 18 months to 30 months and 1:8 for age 24 months to 36 months.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

## 3. Preschool:

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed child care defines Preschool as age 30 months to school-age.

- Ratio:

The state Minimum Standards ratio for preschool is 1:11 for age 30 months to 4 years and 1:18 for age 4 years to school-age.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

#### 4. School-Age

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed child care defines school-age as children who are five years of age on or before September 1 (or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district pursuant to Code of Alabama 1975 Section 16-28-4) of a given year.

- Ratio:

The state Minimum Standards ratio for school-age is 1:21 for school-age up to 8 years and 1:22 for age 8 years and older.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements.

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe:

There are currently no staff to child ratio or group size requirements for exempt programs. The lead agency will have requirements in place by September 30, 2016 for exempt programs participating in the child care subsidy program. Exempt programs participating in the subsidy program will be subject to the same staff/child ratios and group size as licensed programs.

6. Describe, if applicable, ratios and group sizes for centers with mixed age groups.  
Not applicable.

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes:

##### 1. Infant

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed group child care homes defines infant as birth to 18 months.

- Ratio:

The ratio is 2:12. There shall be at least 1 caregiver for each three (3) children younger than 12 months.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

## 2. Toddler

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed group child care homes defines toddler as 18 months to 36 months.

- Ratio:

The ratio is 2:12.

- Group Size:

There are no current group size requirements.

## 3. Preschool:

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed group child care homes defines preschool as 30 months to school-age.

- Ratio:

The ratio is 2:12.

- Group Size:

There are currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy

standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

#### 4. School-Age

- State/Territory age definition:

The State Minimum Standards for licensed group child care homes defines school-age as children who are five years of age on or before September 1 (or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district pursuant to Code of Alabama 1975 Section 16-28-4) of a given year.

- Ratio:

The ratio is 2:12.

- Group Size:

There is currently no group size requirements. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

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

The maximum number of children for group child care is 12 with two caregivers. No more than 6 children can be under 12 months. Children younger than lawful school age who live in the home are included in the child to provider ratio when they are in the home or on the premises. Children of lawful school age and older, who live in the home, shall not be counted.

6. If any of the responses above are different for exempt group child care homes, describe

The state does not have a regulatory designation of exempt group child care home.

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:

The ratio is 1 to 6.

Describe the group size:

There is currently no group size requirement. However, a Fire Marshall inspection is required for all center and home providers. The Fire Marshall sets occupancy standards based on the 2009 edition of the International Building and Fire Code.

Describe the threshold for when licensing is required:

Licensing is required if the program is serving at least one unrelated child for more than 4 hours per day.

Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time:

Family child care homes may receive up to 6 children for care. No more than 3 children can be under 12 months.

Describe if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size:

Children younger than lawful school age who live in the home are included in the child to provider ratio when they are in the home or on the premises.

Describe the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day:

No more than 3 children can be under 12 months. Children of lawful school age and older, who live in the home, shall not be counted.

2. If any of the responses above are different for exempt family child care home providers, describe

The state does not have a regulatory designation of exempt family child care home.

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:

Other CCDF eligible provider categories include related care and in-home care. These categories of care do not have child-to provider ratios and there are no limits on the number of children.

Describe group size:

There is no group size requirement for related care and in-home care.

Describe the threshold for when licensing is required:

There is no licensing requirement for related care and in-home care.

Describe maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time:

There is no maximum number of children allowed for related and in-home.

Describe if the State/Territory requires related children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size:

Not applicable.

Describe the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day:

There is no limit on the number of infants and toddlers or school-age children for related and in-home care.

**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

A lead teacher shall have a high school diploma or GED and 12 hours of training within 30 days after employment.

and assistant teacher qualifications:

An assistant teacher shall have at least an 8th grade education and work under the direct supervision of a person qualified as a child teacher and shall not be counted in the staff-child ratio.

## 2. Toddler lead teacher

A lead teacher shall have a high school diploma or GED and 12 hours of training within 30 days after employment.

and assistant teacher qualifications:

An assistant teacher shall have at least an 8th grade education and work under the direct supervision of a person qualified as a child care teacher and shall not be counted in the staff-child ratio.

## 3. Preschool lead teacher

A lead teacher shall have a high school diploma or GED and 12 hours of training within 30 days after employment.

and assistant teacher qualifications:

An assistant teacher shall have at least an 8th grade education and work under the direct supervision of a person qualified as a child care teacher and shall not be counted in the staff-child ratio.

## 4. School-Age lead teacher

A lead teacher shall have a high school diploma or GED and 12 hours of training within 30 days after employment.

and assistant teacher qualifications:

An assistant teacher shall have at least an 8th grade education and work under the direct supervision of a person qualified as a child care teacher and shall not be counted in the staff-child ratio.

## 5. Director qualifications:

The center director shall have at least 20 clock hours of training in administration and management and at least four clock hours of training in quality child care. In addition the director shall meet the minimum education qualification of a high school diploma or GED, 120 clock hours of training in child care and at least 12 months of experience as a child care worker/teacher or as a director/program director in a licensed day care center or a Department approved setting.

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes:

1. Infant lead teacher

The caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 24 hours of training in child development prior to initial licensing.

and assistant qualifications:

The assistant caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 12 hours of training within the first 30 days of employment.

2. Toddler lead teacher

The caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 24 hours of training in child development prior to initial licensing.

and assistant qualifications:

The assistant caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 12 hours of training within the first 30 days of employment.

3. Preschool lead teacher

The caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 24 hours of training in child development prior to initial licensing.

and assistant qualifications:

The assistant caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 12 hours of training within the first 30 days of employment.

4. School-Age lead teacher

The caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 24 hours of training in child development prior to initial licensing.

and assistant qualifications:

The assistant caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 12 hours of training within the first 30 days of employment.

N/A. State/Territory does not have group child care homes.

c) Licensed Family Child Care home provider qualifications

The caregiver shall have a high school diploma or GED and at least 24 hours of training in child development prior to initial licensing.

d) Other eligible providers qualifications:

Licensed exempt child care centers, related providers and in-home providers do not have required qualifications for staff.

**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

[The lead agency has healthy and safety requirements for licensed child care programs in the areas identified.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices](#)

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.)

[Hire and train additional monitoring staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Notify exempt providers of new requirements](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement requirements for exempt programs](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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) [Substantially implemented](#)

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

[The lead agency has preservice and ongoing training requirements for licensed child care programs. Training requirements are in the following categories:](#)

- Child Development
- Health, Safety and Universal precautions
- Quality child care and licensing
- The child care professional and the family
- Language development
- Positive discipline and guidance

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.)

[Modify agreements with training agencies](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [02/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Hire and train additional monitoring staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Conduct outreach with providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

Child Care Management Agencies  
Quality Enhancement Agencies

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.)

Implement new requirements

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

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Quality Enhancement Agencies

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented ongoing training requirements 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.)

Hire and train additional monitoring staff

Projected start date for each activity: 06/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 08/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

None

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.)

## Conduct outreach with exempt providers

Projected start date for each activity: 07/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 08/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Child Care Management Agencies

Quality Enhancement Agencies

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.)

### Implement new requirements

Projected start date for each activity: 09/01/2016

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Quality Enhancement Agencies

## 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:

Access to physical activity.

Describe:

Screen time.

Describe:

Caring for children with special needs.

Describe:

Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Describe:

Each staff person is required by law to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect.

Other subject areas determined by the State/Territory to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety.

Describe:

**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.

Relative care providers must complete a health and safety checklist before services are approved for subsidy reimbursement. Through a contract with Family Guidance Center of Alabama the lead agency administers the Kids and Kin Relative Child Care Program. The initiative provides training and technical assistance to related child care providers to increase the quality of care in the related child care setting.

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

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 licensed providers meet this requirement.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [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.

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.)

[Hire and train additional monitoring staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Conduct outreach with exempt providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[implement new requirements](#)

Projected start date for each activity: 09/20/2016

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Child Care Management Agencies

Quality Enhancement Agencies

**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:

The minimum requirements for licensing inspectors is a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Child Development, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Home Economics with major coursework in Child Development,

or a closely related field and two years of professional experience in teaching preschool or elementary children, directing day care activities, or in licensing day care facilities.  
[http://personnel.alabama.gov/Documents/Announcements/100221\\_A.pdf](http://personnel.alabama.gov/Documents/Announcements/100221_A.pdf)

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

**b) Inspections for Licensed CCDF Providers** - It will require licensing inspectors to perform inspections, with not less than one precensure 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

*Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers and Nighttime Centers, Section II, B, 7 :*

Licensing inspectors conduct prelicensure inspections and conducts annual unannounced inspections.

*Minimum Standards for Family Day Care Homes, Family Nighttime Homes and Group Day Care Homes and Group Nighttime Homes (Section II, B, 9 ):* Licensing inspectors conduct prelicensure inspections and conducts annual unannounced 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 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:

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) [11/19/2016](#)

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

[No requirements implemented to date.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [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))).

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.)

[Hire and train additional monitoring staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Conduct outreach with exempt providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Train providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [10/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity  
[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement new requirements](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [11/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [11/19/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

Partners - Who is the responsible agency partnering with the State/Territory lead agency to complete implementation of this activity  
[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

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:

[The ratio of licensing inspectors to licensed facilities is 1 to 66.](#)

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

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):

[Each staff person is required by law \(Code of Alabama 1975, Sectionsd 26-14-1 through 26-14-13\) to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the County Department of Human Resources or the local chief of police or county sheriff.](#)

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.

Relative care providers must complete a health and safety checklist before services are approved for subsidy reimbursement. Through a contract with Family Guidance Center of Alabama the lead agency administers the Kids and Kin Relative Child Care Program. The initiative provides training and technical assistance to related child care providers to increase

[the quality of care in the related child care setting.](#)

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) [07/31/2017](#)

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

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

The criminal background checks meets all requirements except a search of the National Crime Information Center (run by the FBI), a search of the child abuse and neglect registry in others State where the staff member has resided over the past 5 years.

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.)

Convene partnering agencies to establish information sharing protocol.

Projected start date for each activity: 08/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 10/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Criminal History

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Abuse and Neglect Registry

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.)

Train staff

Projected start date for each activity: 11/01/2016

Projected end date for each activity: 12/31/2016

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Criminal History

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Abuse and Neglect Registry](#)

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.)

[Outreach to providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [01/01/2017](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [02/28/2017](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Child Care Management Agencies](#)

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Train Providers](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [03/01/2017](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [05/31/2017](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement new requirements](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [06/01/2017](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/31/2017](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented. [National Crime Information Center \(run by the FBI\)](#)

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.)

[Convene partnering agency to establish informationsharing protocol](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [08/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [10/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Criminal History](#)

[Alabama Bureau of Investigation](#)

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.)

[Train Staff](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [11/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [12/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Criminal History](#)

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.)

### Outreach to providers

Projected start date for each activity: 01/01/2017

Projected end date for each activity: 02/28/2017

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Child Care Management Agencies

Quality Enhancement Agencies

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.)

### Train Providers

Projected start date for each activity: 03/01/2017

Projected end date for each activity: 05/31/2017

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Criminal History

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.)

### Implement new requirements

Projected start date for each activity: 06/01/2017

Projected end date for each activity: 07/31/2017

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division

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

None

**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 Lead Agency's Office of Criminal History provides for criminal history checks through online applications and live scans of fingerprints through a third party vendor. Alabama law requires that all reports of criminal history background information received shall be confidential and marked confidential with no further disclosure and shall not be made available for public inspection. Appeals of results of the criminal background check are submitted to the Office of Criminal History. From the point that the applicant completes the live scan the results are submitted to the Office of Criminal History within 3 business days. The results are reviewed by the Office of Criminal History and the applicant is notified within 2 weeks.

**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:

The Lead Agency's Office of Criminal History has responsibilities for actions related to criminal history checks. Alabama law does not allow for criminal history check information to be shared by the lead agency. Other states requesting Alabama criminal history checks are referred to the Alabama Bureau of Investigation. Other states can request Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) information by sending a request to the Alabama Department of Human Resources, Family Services Division.

**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:

Within 30 days of the date of notification, an individual determined unsuitable for

employment based upon a disqualifying conviction may request in writing a reversal of the determination of unsuitability if the conviction is not for a sex crime or a crime committed against a child, an elderly individual, or an individual with disabilities.

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:

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.

The lead agency contract with the background check processing agency specifies the limit of the fees that can be charged for the background check. The limit set for conducting the background check is \$48.75. No additional fees are charged for completing the background check.

**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.

The lead agency contracts with 3M Cogent, Inc. to conduct criminal background checks. The criminal background check procedures, forms and frequently asked questions are available on the Cogent website at [https://www.cogentid.com/al/index\\_dhrNew.htm](https://www.cogentid.com/al/index_dhrNew.htm). General information about the criminal background check requirements and a link to the 3M Cogent site is on the lead agency's 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.

Career ladder or lattice.  
Describe.

The *Alabama Pathways Professional Development Lattice* provides early care and education professionals with a tool to track their professional development. Each individual can identify her/his current place on the *Alabama Pathways Professional Development Lattice*, as well as the progressive path to enhanced training and education within the field of early care and education.

Articulation agreements between two- and four-year postsecondary early childhood education or degree programs.  
Describe.

Articulation agreements are within two- and four-year higher education institutions. Most are local agreements but also there is articulation between the Alabama College System (2-year colleges) and the University of Alabama (one of the state's largest 4-year universities) to accept child development course work obtained at an institution in the Alabama Community College System.

Community-based training approved by a state regulatory body to meet licensing or regulatory requirements.  
Describe.

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.

Continuing Education Units (CEU) trainings are available from regional Quality Enhancement Agencies. Credit-bearing professional development is available through from Alabama Community College System through the T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood Scholarship Programs and the Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program.

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.

The Lead Agency convened a Professional Development Plan Steering consisting of representatives from various early care and education stakeholder groups to plan and develop the Alabama Pathways professional development system to address the training and education needs of caregivers and teachers in the field of early childhood and school-age care. The Lead Agency work was completed in 2009. The Department of Early Childhood Education (formerly the Department of Children's Affairs) is the agency for the SAC and was a member of the Professional Development Steering Committee.

**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.

Training on the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) is required for all centers participating in Alabama Quality STARS. The Quality Enhancement Agencies are required to include training on the AELG as part of their basic training requirements. The AELG includes domains on self-concept/emotional development and social development. Quality Enhancement Agencies offer a variety of training options including onsite training, day and evening sessions, training targeting teachers/caregivers of different age groups, inclusive training through the *Childcare Enhancement with a Purpose* initiative. Training is offered that meets Alabama *Minimum Standards* training requirements, CDA (Child Development Associate) subject areas, and the Alabama Pathways Professional Development core knowledge areas.

**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.

All providers that receive CCDF have access and opportunities for professional development, technical assistance, and support through regional and targeted quality enhancement agencies. Providers supported through the state's tribal organization (the Poarch Band of Creek Indians) are able to access and participate in all training available to providers receiving lead agency funding. All child care providers receive quarterly training calendars from the regional Quality Enhancement Agencies. Training agencies are listed on the CCDF lead agency website along with links to the training agency's website.

**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.

All providers including providers that receive CCDF have access and opportunities for professional development, technical assistance, and support through regional and targeted quality enhancement agencies. All lead agency funded training is free to child care providers. Quality Enhancement Agencies offer a variety of training options including onsite training, day and evening sessions, training targeting teachers/caregivers of different age groups, inclusive training through the *Childcare Enhancement with a Purpose* initiative. Training is offered that meets Alabama *Minimum Standards* training requirements, CDA (Child Development Associate) subject areas, and the Alabama Pathways Professional Development core knowledge areas.

**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.

The lead agency implements two scholarship programs to assist providers attaining credit bearing credentials and post-secondary degrees.

The Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program provides financial assistance (tuition and selected fees) to qualified child care professionals working in the child care centers/programs and family and group homes to obtain a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, Short-Term Certificate, Certificate, or Associate in Applied Science /Technology Degree in Child Development/Early Care and Education studies.

The T.E.A.C.H (Teacher, Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood Alabama Scholarship Program was developed to increase the level of education and effectiveness of early learning professionals by making the educational process more affordable, increasing wages, and reducing staff turnover rates. Scholarships are currently offered for the CDA (Child Development Associate) Assessment Fee, Associate Degrees in Child Development and Early Care and Education

Financial incentives linked to education attainment and retention.

Describe.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Alabama Scholarship Program awards bonuses for participates who complete T.E.A.C.H. educational goals. The program also pays travel

stipends and provides release time for participants to attend classes.

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.

Other.

Describe.

**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.

Alabama contracts with community-based regional Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) to maximize the quality services for children and families in Alabama. QEAs services must

include recruitment and training of child care providers to serve diverse child care populations.

The lead agency provides interpreter/translation services and sign language services to remove language and other communication barriers for families who may be eligible for programs and services. These services are made available to Child Care Management Agencies who determine eligibility for families and register child care providers for the Subsidy Program.

**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.

The lead agency provides interpreter/translation services and sign language services to remove language and other communication barriers for families who may be eligible for programs and services. These services are made available to Child Care Management Agencies who determine eligibility for families and register child care providers for the Subsidy Program.

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

The lead agency has the ability to have translation/interpretation in all primary and secondary

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

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) [Not yet started](#)

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

[No requirements implemented to date.](#)

Unmet requirement - Identify the requirement(s) to be implemented [Use CCDF for activities to improve quality or availability of child care, including training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families](#)

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.)

[Modify agreements with training agencies](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [02/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[None](#)

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.)

[Convene partnering agency to establish training plan and technical assistance strategies](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [07/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [08/31/2016](#)

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity  
[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

[Alabama State Department of Education](#)

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.)

[Conduct Train-the-trainer sessions](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [09/01/2016](#)

Projected end date for each activity: [09/15/2016](#)

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

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

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.)

[Implement training and technical assistance](#)

Projected start date for each activity: [09/16/2016](#)

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

Agency - Who is responsible for complete implementation of this activity

[Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Care Services Division](#)

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

[Quality Enhancement Agencies](#)

## [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.

[The lead agency will monitor and evaluate the number of programs participating in and achieving higher ratings in the Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS program, improvements of scores by providers on national tools such as the FCERS \(Family Child Care](#)

Environment Rating Scale), ITERS (Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale), ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) and PAS (Program Administration Scale) assessments, and the number of teachers reaching higher levels on the Alabama Pathways professional development lattice.

All lead agency funded trainings are evaluated using a pre- and post-test of participant knowledge and understanding of the training content. Quality Enhancement Agencies are required to submit quarterly reports that include information regarding training, consultation, technical assistance, and other quality activities. The evaluation indicates the participation by all categories of providers in quality activities that increase participant knowledge and understanding of child care best practices.

b) Indicate which funds will be used for this activity (check all that apply)

CCDF funds.

Describe:

The lead agency uses Quality Set-aside, Infant/Toddler set-aside, Quality Expansion targeted funds and School-age resource and referral targeted funds for these activities.

Other funds.

Describe:

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:

Training and professional development activities are offered in response to documented needs and are designed to improve the quality of child care provided to children. A variety of methods are encouraged, including resource libraries, provider networks, mentoring programs, and distance education. In collaboration with the Department of Health and Quality Enhancement Agencies the lead agency provides training on the **Building A Healthy Start: Professional Development for Infant and Toddler Caregivers Project**. The Project's purpose purpose is to improve the quality

of infant and toddler child care in Alabama by integrating nationally recognized health and safety standards into six best practice training modules for caregivers of infants and toddlers. Topical areas addressed by the modules are: nutrition, physical activity, disaster preparedness, environmental health, social emotional development, and child abuse and neglect prevention. **The Child Care Enhancement with a Purpose initiative** offers free inclusion training to childcare providers. CCEP utilizes experienced teachers and therapists to share simple, practical ways to work with and include children with special needs in daycare centers or home programs. This program offers a curriculum with a multidisciplinary approach which utilizes developmentally appropriate practices and resources for assistance. **The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG)** credential training offers 9 modules of training to child care providers in domains specific to the development of children from birth through age five, including self-concept and emotional development, social development, physical development, language and literacy, and cognitive development. The training uses scientifically-based, developmentally and age appropriate strategies and includes activities that the providers can implement in their programs. The AELG document includes a scientifically, research-based assessment tool.

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:

Training and professional development activities are offered in response to documented needs from provider surveys, training requests, consultations with providers and professional developments plans established with practitioners, and are designed to improve the quality of child care provided to children. A variety of methods are encouraged, including resource libraries, provider networks, mentoring programs, onsite training and distance education.

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:

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:

Training and professional development activities are offered in response to documented needs and are designed to improve the quality of child care provided to children. A variety of methods are encouraged, including resource libraries, provider networks, mentoring programs, and distance education. **The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG)** credential training offers 9 modules of training to child care providers in five domains specific to the development of children from birth through age five: self-concept and emotional development, social development, physical development, language and literacy, and cognitive development. The training uses scientifically-based developmentally and age appropriate strategies and includes activities that the programs can implement in their programs. The AELG document includes a scientifically, research-based assessment tool.

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:

The **Healthy Child Care Alabama Program** in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health offers services to improve the integration of health concepts in child care environment. The program focuses on identification and referral of infants and toddlers ages birth to three years who are potentially eligible for Alabama's Early Intervention System. The program provides on-site training and technical assistance to all categories of child care programs.

Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement.

Describe:

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:

Training and professional development activities are offered in response to documented needs and are designed to improve the quality of child care provided to children. A variety of methods are encouraged, including resource libraries, provider networks, mentoring programs, and distance education. **The Child Care Enhancement with a Purpose initiative** offers free inclusion training to childcare providers. CCEP utilizes experienced teachers and therapists to share simple, practical ways to work with and include children with special needs in daycare centers or home programs. This program offers a curriculum with a multidisciplinary approach which utilizes developmentally appropriate practices and resources for assistance. On-site support and training is available for child care programs. The initiative also provides qualified support for families.

Supporting positive development of school-age children.

Describe:

The lead agency provides the **Dependent Care Program** a statewide program for quality school age care utilizing local education agencies in partnership with the Alabama State Department of Education. The lead agency is member of the Alabama Afterschool Community Network (ALACN). The ALACN purpose is to ensure Alabama youth, families, and communities have access to high quality programming during Out-of-School time that promotes positive development and life-long learning. Other collaborators in this initiative include the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and the Alabama Community Education Association (ACEA). Through this collaboration the state is developing quality standards for afterschool programs. A draft of the standards can be found on the ALACN website at <http://alabamaacn.org/>.

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:

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

Licensed center teachers are required to have 12 hours of pre-service training within 30 days of employment.

All licensed child care center programs are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

Licensed center teachers are required to complete 12 ongoing hours of training each

year.

All licensed child care center programs are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

b) Licensed Group Child Care Homes

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

Licensed group child care homes are required to have 12 hours of pre-service training within 30 days of employment. All licensed group child care homes are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

Licensed group child care homes are required to complete 12 ongoing hours of training each year.

All licensed group child care homes are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

c) Licensed Family Child Care Provider

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

Licensed family child care homes are required to have 12 hours of pre-service training within 30 days of employment.

All family child care homes are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

Licensed family child care homes are required to complete 12 ongoing hours of

training each year.

All licensed family child care homes are required to obtain training in the following categories, in addition to CPR and First Aid Training: child development; health, safety and universal precautions; quality child care and licensing; the child care professional and the family; language development; positive discipline and guidance.

d) Any other eligible CCDF provider

1) Number of pre-service or orientation hours and any required areas/content

Other CCDF eligible providers are not currently required to have pre-service or orientation hours.

2) Number of on-going hours and any required areas/content

Other CCDF eligible providers are not currently required to have pre-service or orientation 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

Alabama contracts with state agency and community-based Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) to maximize the quality services for children, families in Alabama. QEAs offer training and supports to encourage providers to operate their programs consistent with effective management skills and business practices. Training includes Director's forums that include

training specific to the managerial duties of child care directors and owners, training on using computers and social media, budgeting, program marketing and community outreach.

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

[Alabama's Early Learning Guidelines were revised in 2014.](#)

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:

Three-to-Five

Provide a link:

Birth-to-Five

Provide a link:

Alabama's Early Learning Guidelines can be accessed on the lead agency website at <http://dhr.alabama.gov/documents/AELG.pdf>. This link is for the Early Learning Guidelines established prior to 2014. The revised guidelines are going through final review and development of training modules and are not available online.

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:

Out-of-School Quality Standard are being developed by the Alabama Afterschool Community Network (ALACN). The lead agency is a member of the ALACN steering committee and participated in the development and review of the draft standards. The standards are posted for comment at <http://alabamaacn.org/connections/>.

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 but not State/Territory-wide

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:

Quality Enhancement Agencies provide training on the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines. The training includes implementation strategies. These agencies also provide technical assistance to programs on implementation through consultation or onsite modeling. Embedded within each early learning guidelines training module are practice exercises to support the learners understanding of how to implement the guidelines into curriculum and learning activities. Providers may receive additional follow-up consultation or onsite coaching following the training.

The technical assistance is linked to the State's/Territory's quality rating and improvement system.

Describe:

Quality Enhancement Agencies provide training on the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG). The training includes implementation strategies. These agencies also provide technical assistance to programs on implementation through consultation or onsite modeling. Training on the AELG is required at STAR 2 of the Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS. Quality Enhancement Agencies provide this training through facilitated online training and classroom sessions.

Child care providers working with infants and/or toddlers have access to the

technical assistance for implementing early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

Quality Enhancement Agencies provide training on the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines. The training includes implementation strategies. These agencies also provide technical assistance to programs on implementation through consultation or onsite modeling.

Child care providers working with preschool-age children have access to the technical assistance for implementing early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

Quality Enhancement Agencies provide training on the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines. The training includes implementation strategies. These agencies also provide technical assistance to programs on implementation through consultation or onsite modeling.

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.)

The lead agency utilize CCDF Quality set- aside, Infant/Toddler set-aside, and Quality expansion targeted funds for these initiatives.

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

#### **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

The overarching goals of quality improvement activities is to enhance the quality of child care, to positively impact the early learning experiences of young children and support the training and education needs of caregivers and teachers in the field of early childhood and

school-age care. The 2014 Needs Assessment conducted by the Children's Policy Council, which serves as the State Advisory Council, listed Early Learning as one of the top 12 issues impacting Alabama's children. The needs assessment identified school readiness and quality childcare as specific areas of need. The goals of quality improvement target these identified needs.

**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](#)

Other funds.

Describe other funding sources (e.g., Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, state or local funds, etc.)

[Foundation funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.](#)

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.)

[Quality set-aside and infant-toddler set aside](#)

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.)

[Quality set-aside](#)

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.)

[Quality set-aside](#)

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.)

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.)

[Quality set-aside and quality expansion targeted funds.](#)

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](#)

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

[Alabama's QRIS - Alabama Quality STARS is state administered and began operating](#)

statewide for center child care programs in March 2016 . The website for Alabama Quality STARS is [www.alabamaqualitystars.org](http://www.alabamaqualitystars.org). The lead agency administers Alabama Quality STARS through a contract with the University of Alabama. The University assesses programs, recommends STAR ratings, collects data and subcontracts management of the Alabama Professional Development Registry.

Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS operating as a pilot, in a few localities, or only a few levels but not fully operating State/Territory-wide.

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.)

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

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:

Programs that cannot be licensed by the lead agency but are regulated by a federal agency or another state agency can participate in the QRIS. Licensed faith-based settings can participate in the QRIS.

**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:

The following performance measures are used to evaluate progress: Number of Participants and Programs reached by program quality initiatives; Number of technical assistance visits provided and type of provider setting receiving technical assistance visits; and Impact of professional development initiatives on quality indicators such as: Business and Management Skills, Child Development, Health and Safety, Inclusion, Ongoing Training to Meet Minimum Standards and Parent Involvement.

### 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:

The Family Child Care Partnership Program (FCCP) is administered through a contract with Auburn University. The purpose of the FCCP project is to assist family child care providers to provide high quality child care services, with a focus on moving them toward national accreditation standards. By fulfilling this purpose, it is the vision of FCCP to ensure that family child care providers develop and apply their knowledge, and become aware of and utilize available supports, in ways that foster the healthy growth and development of the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in their care. The FCCP supports providing is developing and maintaining statewide and local family child care associations.

- Providing training and professional development to promote and expand child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers.

Describe:

The lead agency contracts with eight non-profit community based agencies and one state university to provide training, technical assistance and professional development to child care providers. The agencies referred to as Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) service all 67 counties in Alabama. Each agency has a catchment area of 5 to 12 counties where services are provided. All training, technical assistance and professional development content must demonstrate the use of scientifically-based, developmentally appropriate and age appropriate strategies.

- 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:

Beginning in October 2016 the lead agency will offer contracts for infant/toddler slots to providers that are rated at STAR 5 on the Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS.

- Providing coaching and/or technical assistance on this age group's unique needs from Statewide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists.

Describe:

The Alabama Infant Toddler Professional Development Network began as a support for programs participating in the Alabama Quality STARS pilot. It has been expanded to include support to infant toddler teachers in the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership Program. The Infant Toddler Professional Development Network offers technical assistance, modeling, mentoring, and professional development support to infant toddler teachers. The programs develops a professional development plan with each teacher.

- 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:

Developing infant and toddler components within the State's/Territory's child care licensing regulations.

Describe:

Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and development guidelines.

Describe:

[The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines includes developmental domains for children for infants and toddlers.](#)

Improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy to understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care.

Describe:

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:

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:

The Lead Agency will monitor implementation of the Alabama Quality STARS - QRIS for center providers to collect information on the number of programs obtaining STAR levels and continue monitoring of caregivers/teachers receiving the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines credential. All Lead Agency quality training activities are evaluated using a pre- and posttest of participant knowledge and understanding of the concepts presented in training. Quality Enhancement Agencies are required to submit quarterly status reports that include information regarding training, consultations, technical assistance, and other quality activities. Lead Agency will monitor the number programs achieving higher levels of professional development that serve Subsidy children. Through the Alabama Pathways professional development registry the lead agency will have the capacity to monitor the levels of professional development of caregivers in programs participating in the Alabama Quality STARS.

## 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 lead agency contracts with eight non-profit community based agencies and one state university to provide child care resource and referral services. The agencies referred to as Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEA) service all 67 counties in Alabama. Each agency has a catchment area of 5 to 12 counties where services are provided. The agencies meet quarterly with the lead agency to discuss shared goals, implementation strategies and collaborative activities with other agencies. There is not a statewide network.

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:

All Lead Agency quality training activities are evaluated using a pre- and post-test of participant knowledge and understanding of the concepts presented in training. Quality Enhancement Agencies are required to submit quarterly status reports that include information regarding training, consultations, technical assistance, and other quality activities. Lead Agency will monitor the results of the training offered by Quality Enhancement agencies. The lead agency will monitor the number of and types of programs participating quality activities.

### **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:

The lead agency funds licensing inspectors who conduct annual monitoring of compliance with required health and safety, training, and licensing standards. Alabama Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) provide training to child care programs. QEAs provider training (including on-site), technical assistance and supports to providers to help them maintain and exceeding licensing Minimum Standards.

#### **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:

Licensing inspectors receive training on the licensing standards and the monitoring process and an evaluation of job performance is conducted annually.

## 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

With the implementation of Alabama Quality STARS the lead agency will measure the number of low-income subsidy eligible children enrolled in STAR rated programs. The lead agency will also measure the number of children enrolled in nationally accredited programs. Quality Enhancement Agencies offer basic training to child care programs on the Environment Rating Scales tools and the Program Administrative Scale. The QEAs will conduct a review using the tools for programs participating in Alabama Quality STARS.

### **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:

The state will evaluate improvement in scores on the Environment Rating Scales and Program Administration Scale assessment. The lead agency will evaluate the movement of programs toward researched based curriculums. Using the data from the T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood Scholarship program, the Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program and the Alabama Pathways Professional Development registry the lead agency will monitor professional development achievements of caregivers/teachers.

## 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

The Lead Agency provides training, technical assistance, on-site coaching/mentoring to child care providers to achieve accreditation. Supports are offered statewide for Home child care providers through an agreement with Auburn University Family Child Care Partnership. The initiatives support Home providers working to achieve NAFCC (National Association of Family Child Care) accreditation.

Accreditation supports are offered to Quality Enhancement Agencies for center programs. The agencies support providers working to achieve NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

Yes, the State/Territory has supports operating as a pilot or in a few localities but not State/Territory-wide.

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:

The lead agency will evaluate progress by tracking the number of new programs participating in accreditation initiatives, the number of new programs achieving accreditation during the fiscal year, the number of accredited programs maintaining accreditation, and the number of programs making progress beyond the initial baseline assessment.

## 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:

The lead agency is planning to collaborate with the state's Help Me Grow - Alabama initiative and Strengthening Family initiative increase the lead agency's ability to link families with community resources and support family engagement. The lead agency is developing an agreement with the University of Alabama at Birmingham, School of Public Health to develop nutrition standards that can be implemented by providers and a train-the-trainer module for Quality Enhancement Agencies to provide guidance and support to child care programs implementing the nutrition standards.

### **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:

The lead agency will evaluate the family's access, specifically Subsidy eligible family, to these services.

## 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.**

The lead agency has developed the Infant - Toddler Professional Development Network to

improve the professional practice of Alabama's infant-toddler teachers. The Networks mission is to increase the educational level and skills of infant-toddler teachers, support teachers in their classrooms by providing one-on-one guidance and provide technical assistance for teachers as they develop personalized professional development plans. This project is funded through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

## 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:

The lead agency's program integrity policies have been in place since 2011. The policies address the requirements of the CCDBG Act of 2014 including definitions of violations that include administrative error, unintentional agency error, as well as program violations, both

unintentional and intentional. Policy training is conducted for staff on an annual basis with more frequent training conducted on request or as deemed necessary by the lead agency.

### 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:

Lead agency staff conduct on-site compliance visits as well as on-site technical assistance visits ensure that eligibility staff are informed and trained in new policy.

- 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 Child Care Management Agencies (CMAs) and Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) are monitored by the Department to determine contract compliance as well as compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations and departmental policies and procedures. Agencies are selected through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The current contracts were issued for a two-year time frame with an option for renewal or extension of the contract. If a contract is extended or renewed, the contracting agency must submit a new budget for review and approval. State level staff provides training and technical assistance to contractors on all issues including budget and policy. A policy specialist provides clarification as needed and conducts training on policy issues. QEA agencies submit quarterly reports of activities that are compared with the services to be performed as outlined in the contract. Program monitoring by Lead Agency staff is conducted on a random sample of records from each CMA agency to ensure proper application of program policies. During the monitoring visits, case records and provider records are randomly selected and reviewed for compliance with subsidy policy and procedures. Cases are reviewed for correct application of policy as well as correct knowledge of child care computer system data entry. Agencies are sent a formal report of the results of the monitoring review. The report summarizes the number and percentage of authorization errors. Agencies are required to submit a Corrective Action Plan detailing how the agency will address the identified errors, implement procedures with caseworkers to reduce future errors, and implement actions to recover improper payments. At the next review, progress on the corrective action plan is monitored by Lead Agency staff. Agencies have been given an error rate target. Agencies that do not meet the error rate target have points deducted from their score in subsequent response to a Request for Proposal to administer Subsidy Program eligibility services.

**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:

Inactivity Report - indicates parents who have not utilized child care services, this could indicate parent has changed providers or that services are no longer needed but the parent has failed to contact agency.

New Provider Report and Inactive Provider Report - details providers new to system and providers no longer participating so that appropriate actions can be taken with the children enrolled or seeking to enroll with the provider.

Underutilization Report - indicates children who are not attending at the authorized level, contact can be made to determine if services are still needed or a change in level of services is needed.

The Department can also create ad hoc reports when needed for special circumstances.

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:

The Department's Child Care Management System (CCMS) and Time and Attendance System (TAS) generate monthly and weekly administrative reports. CCMS allows state staff to view eligibility determinations made by local agencies. The system has audit trail capability to track changes made changes to a specific case, the specific user who made the change and what changes were made. Demographic information and licensing status is entered only by licensing staff which prevents the creation of provider records for centers that are not legally operating and prevents continued payment to program no longer legally operating. The Department can also create ad hoc reports when needed for special circumstances.

Management reports within TAS include: *Adjustment Summary Report* of all adjustment to payments (credit or debit), the user who completed the adjustment and the date; *New Provider Report* and *Inactive Provider Report* - detail providers new to system and providers no longer participating so that appropriate actions can be taken with the children enrolled or seeking to enroll with the provider. *Underutilization Report* - indicates children who are not attending at the authorized level, contact can be made to determine if services are still needed or a change in level of services is needed.

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: **\$35**

- 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: \$35

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: \$35

- 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:

Parents and providers who commit intentional program violations are sanctioned for three (3) months for the first offense, six (6) months for the second offense and one year for the third and any subsequent offenses. Sanctions means the parent or provider cannot participate in the program during the sanction period. Clients have the right to request an administrative review or an administrative hearing, within 60 days in response to any action taken to deny, reduce, or terminate services, if the client feels such action

was taken outside the context of Program policy.

Disqualify provider.

If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified:

Providers who commit intentional program violations are sanctioned for three (3) months for the first offense, six (6) months for the second offense and one year for the third and any subsequent offenses. Sanctions means the provider cannot participate in the program during the sanction period.

A child care provider has the right to request a fair hearing in response to any action to deny or terminate Program participation .

Prosecute criminally

Other.

Describe: