**NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

In accordance with G.L. c. 30A, the Board of Early Education and Care (EEC) is proposing amendments to its regulations found at 606 CMR 10.00, pursuant to its authority under G.L. c. 15D, § 3. The proposed amendments are to the Child Care Financial Assistance regulations.

The main goals of these revised regulations are: 1) to increase overall system efficiency; 2) to prioritize family needs and experience; and 3) to modernize and update the overall child care financial assistance system. Specifically, there are forty-one (41) proposed substantive regulatory changes in addition to textual changes to make the regulations more accessible and user-friendly. Some highlights of the proposed substantive changes are:

* Reducing and eliminating unnecessary and duplicative documentation and reporting requirements that create an undue burden for parents applying for and maintaining child care financial assistance;
* Updating the employment definitions and requirements to reflect the changing nature of work, including more flexibility for hourly wage earners and those working from home;
* Adding qualifying service needs for domestic violence, waiving fees for homeless families, and easing and updating reporting requirements for individuals with disabilities or participating in treatment for substance abuse;
* Amending the definitions of possible sanctions to clarify the intentional nature of program violations and eliminating the imposition of penalties and loss of financial assistance for clear mistakes or missing or incorrect paperwork with no clear intent to defraud; and
* Aligning regulations and requirements with associated agencies like DTA and DCF to streamline processes and reduce administrative burdens for EEC, those agencies, and applicants.

At the December 13, 2022, EEC Board meeting, Board Members voted to adopt these regulations in draft form and to provide for an extended public comment period.

Accordingly, EEC will accept comments on the proposed regulations via e-mail to christine.mcgrath@mass.gov, or in writing to Department of Early Education and Care, 50 Milk Street, 14th Floor, Boston, MA 02109 ATTN: CHILD CARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REGULATIONS: LEGAL until 5:00 p.m. on February 17, 2023. To obtain a copy of the proposed regulations, please visit EEC’s website at [www.mass.gov/eec](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdkarlin%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CPY48L6US%5Cwww.mass.gov%5Cecc).