Supportive Reimbursement

**EEC Management Bulletin: EMB FY 2008 - 02S**

**For Use By: Supportive Child Care Providers & Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)
Supersedes: the following supportive policies, procedures and forms:**

* Supportive Reimbursement Policy (P-EEC-Supportive-19)

Sections of the following Supportive policies and forms have been revised to increase the number of days for which providers may be reimbursed when a child terminates without sufficient notice from 10 to 15 days:

* Termination of Supportive Child Care & DSS Appeal Rights (P-EEC Supportive-09);
* Summary of DSS Social Worker Responsibilities (P-EEC-Supportive-11);
* Summary of DSS Area Child Care Coordinator Responsibilities (P-EEC-Supportive-12);
* Supportive Attendance Form; and
* Advance Notice of Termination Form

**Please note: All current policies, procedures, and forms that are not cited in the preceding list remain in effect.**

Date Issued: February 28, 2008
Effective Date: March 3, 2008

Synopsis:

Updates policies, procedures, and forms for reimbursement of supportive child care services to include three types of supportive child care funding: contracted slots, contract expansion lines, and supportive child care vouchers. Related policies and forms have also been revised to increase the number of days required for advance notice of termination from 10 to 15 in order to align with the reimbursement timeframes for supportive child care (which have not changed). For more information, email bulletinquestions@massmail.state.ma.us.

**Policies and Procedures Applicable to All Supportive Child Care Providers**

**1.0. Supportive Reimbursement**

Supportive Child Care providers will be reimbursed for child care and support services provided, including transportation and social services, regardless of whether services are provided in a contracted slot, through contract expansion lines, or through a supportive voucher. Enrollment and reimbursement begin on a child's first day in child care.

**1.2. Definition of Service Days**

Service days include enrolled days (inclusive of days present and absent), holidays, and approved closures. Approved closures include holidays that are listed in the provider's contract with the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) or with the CCR&R in a provider's Standard Provider Agreement for the Provision of Voucher Child Care Services.

**1.3. Supportive Attendance Reimbursement**

Supportive Child Care providers are required to complete a Supportive Attendance Agreement with each family whose child is enrolled in their program through a referral from the Department of Social Services (DSS). Providers are required to monitor and report attendance in eCCIMS or on their Voucher Request for Reimbursement (RFR) forms as well as follow all EEC policies related to immediate notification of appropriate DSS staff (i.e., the DSS social worker, supervisor, and/or area child care coordinator) regarding unexplained absences, any absences of concern, sporadic attendance, or absences of 11 days or longer. Providers who have not taken appropriate action to deal with unexplained or excessive absences may not be reimbursed for those absences.

**1.4. Monitoring Supportive Utilization**

EEC will monitor utilization, and may amend contracts to reduce capacity or terminate a voucher when under-utilization persists for any reason. For contracted slots, days utilized are the number of enrolled slots multiplied by the number of service days in a given month. In addition, EEC expects that, regardless of payment mechanism, in most cases, sufficient notice will be given in advance of any termination date. EEC will monitor provider compliance and will contact DSS area offices and providers when there is excessive use of the vacant day period.

**1.5. Weather Emergencies**

Programs are to remain open during inclement weather with arrangements for skeleton crew coverage except in the case of an emergency declared by the Department of Public Works. However, if prevailing weather conditions are so extreme as to be considered unsafe, the provider may decide to close. Providers must maintain in their files documentation (such as local newspaper clippings) demonstrating the extreme weather conditions. Excessive closings or closings considered by EEC to be unwarranted will be reviewed and may be disqualified from payment. Providers will not be reimbursed for unscheduled closings that are within the provider's control.

**1.6. Reimbursement to Family Child Care Providers**

Family child care systems (Systems) must reimburse family child care providers for every day that they are reimbursed by EEC, at a rate equal to or greater than the regional rate for the Tier for which the system has qualified. Systems cannot bill for days in excess of the fourteen preapproved closure days where an affiliated family child care provider is closed and unavailable to provide care. Where substitute care is provided, Systems may bill for services and must pay the provider who actually provides the substitute care. Where substitute care is offered and refused by a family, Systems cannot bill for children in that family for any days where care is not provided.

**Supportive Contract Reimbursement**

**2.0. Supportive Contract Flexibility Among Contracted Prototypes**

Each supportive contract carries a maximum obligation for child care slots, based on the number of slots for which EEC has contracted in each age group. Supportive contracted child care slots can be used by any age group the provider is approved to serve, provided that the provider complies with licensing requirements, and will be reimbursed at the rate appropriate for the age of the child actually using the slot multiplied by the number of days utilized. This flexibility applies among all the prototypes for which the provider is contracted.

**2.1. Supportive Child Care Contracted Slot Reimbursement**

For children enrolled in supportive contracted slots, child care services will be reimbursed at the contracted (daily) rate for the prototype that the child is actually using multiplied by the number of enrolled days. In addition, if there are no children enrolled in supportive expansion, a provider may be reimbursed up to 15 days between a child's termination from care and a new enrollment (whichever comes first). No vacant day period is allowable when the provider has received sufficient notice, or has children enrolled in expansion. In cases where a vacancy occurs in a contracted slot, a new child may be enrolled or a child must be transferred from expansion to fill the contract vacancy.

**2.2. Support Services Reimbursement for Contracted Slots**

Support services for supportive contracted slots are reimbursed at an accommodation rate multiplied by the number of slots for which the provider holds a contract, regardless of utilization. Therefore, in addition to reimbursement for child care services described in Section 2.1 above, contracted Supportive Child Care providers are reimbursed in the accommodation line one twelfth of their annual maximum obligation each month.

**Supportive Expansion Reimbursement**

**3.0. Supportive Expansion Reimbursement: Child Care Services**

For children enrolled in supportive expansion, child care services are reimbursed at the contracted (daily) rate multiplied by the number of enrolled days for the appropriate prototype in which the child is enrolled. Supportive expansion is limited to currently contracted supportive prototypes only.

**3.1. Supportive Expansion Enrollments and Contracted Slot Vacancies**

If there are any children enrolled in a provider's program through supportive expansion, when a child terminates from a supportive contracted slot and the provider is unable to immediately fill the slot with a new child, a provider must transfer a child enrolled through expansion into the vacant contracted slot. In selecting which child should be transferred to a contract slot, the provider must first try to match the program type where the vacancy occurred. In cases where no children match the current vacancy, the provider shall select a child from a different program type and change the vacancy type to match the child's program type. No reimbursement for vacant days is allowable for children who are transferred from supportive expansion into a vacant supportive contracted slot.

**3.2. Termination of a Child from Supportive Expansion**

If a provider receives insufficient notice of a child's termination from supportive expansion, the provider may be reimbursed up to a maximum of 15 days after the termination date (minus the days of notice) or up to the date when a new DSS-referred child is enrolled, whichever occurs first.

**3.3. Support Services Reimbursement for Expansion**

Support services provided through expansion lines are paid on a daily rate basis 1 beginning from a child's first date of enrollment. For children enrolled less than full-time, the support services rate will be reimbursed for each day the child is enrolled (i.e., when a child is enrolled three days a week, the support services rate will be reimbursed on a three day a week basis; when a child is enrolled five days a week for half days, the support services rate will be reimbursed for five days a week).

Reimbursement for support services provided through an expansion line ends on the day a child is transferred into a contracted slot from expansion.

When a child terminates from supportive expansion and the child has attended any day in a month (and the month does not include the child's start date), support services are reimbursed for the full month, or until the date when a new DSS-referred child is enrolled, whichever comes first. However, when a child begins and ends services within the same month, support services are reimbursed from the child's start date to the end of the month (or per day of scheduled enrollment when a child is enrolled less than full-time).

When a child is enrolled less than full-time and the child has attended any day in a month, support services are reimbursed for the full month for each day of the child's scheduled enrollment, unless the child begins and ends services within the same month.

**3.4. Supportive Contract/Expansion Attendance**

No more than three consecutive unexplained absences immediately prior to a child's termination are billable. See P-EEC-Supportive-16: Ongoing Responsibilities of the Supportive Child Care Provider.

**Supportive Voucher Reimbursement**

**4.0. Supportive Voucher Reimbursement by a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency**

Reimbursement by a CCR&R is limited to current supportive providers that chose to expand to include new program types or new geographic areas for which they are not currently contracted, or to non-contracted Head Start agencies, or non-contracted child care providers that chose to participate in expansion in selected underserved DSS areas. Participating providers must hold an Addendum to the Provider Agreement for the Provision of Voucher Child Care Services: Supportive Child Care Services and a Standard Provider Agreement for the Provision of Voucher Child Care Services.

**4.1 Supportive Voucher Enrollment**

The DSS Authorization for Supportive Child Care (Authorization) replaces the issuance of a voucher and is the basis for reimbursement by the CCR&R for the enrolled child. A copy of the Authorization must be retained in the child's case record.

**4.2. Supportive Voucher Reimbursement: Child Care Services**

Providers receive the daily child care rate for the program type in which the DSS child is enrolled beginning on the child's first date of enrollment until the child's termination date, in accordance with the provider's Standard Provider Agreement for the Provision of Voucher Child Care Services. In addition, if there is insufficient notice given prior to termination, providers may be reimbursed up to a maximum of 10 days after the termination date (minus the days of notice) or up to the date another DSS supportive voucher child is enrolled, whichever occurs first.

**4.3. Support Services Reimbursement for Vouchers**

Support services are paid on a daily rate basis 2 beginning from the child's first date of enrollment on a supportive voucher. For children enrolled less than full-time, the support services rate will be reimbursed for each day the child is enrolled (i.e., when a child is enrolled three days a week, the support services rate will be reimbursed on a three day a week basis; when a child is enrolled five days a week for half days, the support services rate will be reimbursed five days a week). When a child terminates from a supportive voucher and the child has attended any day in a month (and the month does not include the child's start date), support services are reimbursed for the full month when the vacancy left by that child has not yet been filled by another DSS supportive voucher child. However, when a child begins and ends services within the same month, support services are reimbursed from the child's start date to the end of the month (or per day of scheduled enrollment when a child is enrolled less than full-time).

When a child is enrolled less than full-time and a child has attended any day in a month, support services are reimbursed for the full month for each day of the child's scheduled enrollment, unless the child begins and ends services within the same month.

**4.4. Supportive Voucher Attendance**

Providers must enter absences as "excused absences" in order to ensure payment, but are required to explain in the RFR form narrative the details of unexcused absences beyond three days per month or excused absences that total 11 or more per month.

**4.5. Required Documents**

To prepare a monthly RFR form on a timely basis for billing, the CCR&R must, on a weekly basis, receive copies of the EEC Child Care Application and Fee Agreement and the Authorization for children initially enrolled or reauthorized each week.

**4.6. Method of Submission**

Supportive providers may fax the required documentation to the appropriate CCR&R for reimbursement or, if mutually agreed upon, a provider and the CCR&R may choose instead to develop a spreadsheet and transmit the required data elements electronically.

1 The daily rate is outlined in EEC's April 20, 2007 letter regarding the increase to the supportive transportation rate.

2 This daily rate is outlined in the Addendum to the Provider Agreement for the Provision of Voucher Child Care Services: Supportive Child Care Services.

Information provided by the [Department of Early Education and Care](http://www.mass.gov/eec) . Created: February 28, 2008. Updated: May 13, 2011.