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Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan

for

State/Territory Massachusetts

FFY 2019–2021

This Plan describes the Child Care and Development Fund program to be administered by the State or Territory for the period from 10/1/2018 to 9/30/2021, as provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations. The Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including amending the options selected or described.

For purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions of applicable laws printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text. The Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to the applicable laws regardless of these modifications.

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Introduction and How to Approach Plan Development

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program provides resources to state, territory, and tribal grantees that enable low-income parents to work or pursue education and training so that they can better support their families while at the same time promoting the learning and development of their children. The CCDF program also provides funding to enhance the quality of child care for all children. On November 19, 2014, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 was signed into law (Pub. L. 113-186). The law reauthorizes and significantly revises the purposes of the CCDF program and requirements for state and territory grantees. In September 2016, the final rule was released. The final rule makes regulatory changes to the CCDF program based on the CCDBG Act of 2014. These changes strengthen requirements to protect the health and safety of children in child care; help parents make informed consumer choices and access information to support child development; provide equal access to stable, child care for low-income children; and enhance the quality of child care and the early childhood workforce.

The Plan is the primary mechanism that the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) uses to determine state and territory compliance with the requirements of the law and rule. The Preprint provides a tool for states and territories to describe to ACF their progress on the following sections:

1. Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination With Relevant Systems
2. Promote Family Engagement Through Outreach and Consumer Education
3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families
4. Ensure Equal Access to Child Care for Low-Income Families
5. Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes To Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings
6. Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce
7. Support Continuous Quality Improvement
8. Ensure Grantee Accountability

These organizational categories reflect key functions of an integrated system of child care for low-income working families. Although the Plan is divided into sections for reporting and accountability purposes, ACF encourages Lead Agencies to approach the Plan in a cross-cutting, integrated manner. The intention is that grantees and the federal government will be able to use this information to track and assess progress, determine the need for technical assistance (TA), and determine compliance with specific requirements and deadlines.

CCDF Plan Submission

States and territories will submit their Plans electronically through the ACF-118 electronic submission site. The ACF-118 site will include all language and questions included in the final CCDF Plan Preprint template approved by the Office of Management and Budget. Please note that the format of the questions on the ACF-118 site could be modified from the Word version of the document to ensure compliance with Section 508 policies regarding accessibility to electronic and information technology for individuals with disabilities. (See <http://www.section508.gov/> for more information.)

In responding to questions, states and territories are asked to provide brief, specific summaries and/or bullet points only with specific language that responds to the question. Do not use tables or copy and paste charts, add attachments, or paste manuals into the Plan. All information and materials developed to support CCDF implementation and information reported in the CCDF Plan are subject to review by ACF as part of ongoing oversight and monitoring efforts.

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination With Relevant Systems

This section identifies the leadership for the CCDF program in each Lead Agency and the entities and individuals who will participate in the implementation of the program. It also identifies the stakeholders that were consulted to develop the Plan and who the Lead Agency collaborates with to implement services. In this section respondents are asked to identify how match and maintenance-of-effort (MOE) funds are identified. Coordination with child care resource and referral (CCR&R) systems are explained, and Lead Agencies outline the work they have done on their disaster preparedness and response plans.

1.1 CCDF Leadership

The Governor of a state or territory must designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency) or establish a joint interagency 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 interagency office designated by the state or 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)).

a) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Office Information:

Name of Lead Agency: The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

Street Address: 51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor

City: Boston

State: MA

ZIP Code: 02210

Web Address for Lead Agency: www.mass.gov/eec

b) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Official Contact Information:

Lead Agency Official First Name: Thomas L.

Lead Agency Official Last Name: Weber

Title: Commissioner

Phone Number: 617-988-6600

Email Address: tom.weber@mass.gov

1.1.2 Who is the CCDF Administrator?

Identify the CCDF Administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, or the person with responsibility for administering the state's or 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 the person with administrative responsibilities and include his or her contact information.

a) CCDF Administrator Contact Information:

CCDF Administrator First Name: Thomas L.

CCDF Administrator Last Name: Weber

Title of the CCDF Administrator: Commissioner

Address for the CCDF Administrator (if different from the Lead Agency):

Street Address: 51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor

City: Boston

State: MA

ZIP Code: 02210

Phone Number: 617-988-6600

Email Address: tom.weber@mass.gov

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

CCDF Co-Administrator First Name: Thomas B.

CCDF Co-Administrator Last Name: Myers

Title of the CCDF Co-Administrator: Assistant General Counsel

Address of the CCDF Co-Administrator (if different from the Lead Agency):

Street Address: 51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor

City: Boston

State: MA

ZIP Code: 02210

Phone Number: 617-988-6620

Email Address: thomas.b.myers@mass.gov

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator: Responsible for the day to day management of the CCDF program in the Commonwealth, including analyzing and updating regulations and policies, as well as responding to inquiries related to the CCDF program from key stakeholders, including families, educators, providers, legislators and other State administrators.

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 public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program (658D(b)). Administrative and implementation responsibilities undertaken by

agencies other than the Lead Agency must be governed by written agreements that specify the mutual roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and other agencies in meeting the program requirements.

1.2.1 Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are administered (i.e., set or established) at the state or territory level or local level? Identify whether CCDF program rules and policies are established by the state or territory (even if operated locally) or whether the CCDF policies or rules are established by local entities, such as counties or workforce boards (98.16(i)(3)). Check one.

- All program rules and policies are set or established at the state or 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.
 1. Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:
 - State or territory
 - Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.
 - Other. Describe: .
 2. Sliding-fee scale is set by the:
 - State or territory
 - Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.
 - Other. Describe: .
 3. Payment rates are set by the:
 - State or territory
 - Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.
 - Other. Describe: .
 4. Other. List other program rules and policies and describe (e.g., quality rating and improvement systems [QRIS], payment practices):

1.2.2 How is the CCDF program operated? In other words, which entity(ies) implement or perform these CCDF services? Check all that apply.

a) Who conducts eligibility determinations?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agency
- Other state or territory agency

- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Other. _____

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

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Other state or territory agency
- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Other. EEC contracts with Mass 211 to provide statewide information and referral services to families seeking early education and care programs and services in the Commonwealth.

c) Who issues payments?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency.
- Other state or territory agency.
- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments.
- Child care resource and referral agencies.
- Community-based organizations.
- Other. EEC contracts with Mass 211 to provide statewide information and referral services to families seeking early education and care programs and services in the Commonwealth.

1.2.3 What processes will the Lead Agency use to monitor administrative and implementation responsibilities performed by agencies other than the Lead Agency as indicated above, such as through written agreements or monitoring and auditing processes (98.11(a)(3))? Describe those processes and any indicators or measures used to assess performance. All state and federally funded providers that contract with EEC to provide and/or manage subsidized child care for eligible families including family child care systems and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRRs) are subject to fiscal and compliance monitoring by EECs ACR Unit. The EEC monitoring process has five (5) major components as follows: 1. Identification of CCRR, Contract Provider, and Grant Awards (Subrecipients), 2. Provider Risk Assessment Analysis Review (PRAAR), 3. Development of the On- Site Monitoring Review Schedule, 4. On-Site Monitoring Review (OSMR) and 5. Corrective Actions. The onsite monitoring program consists of activities to confirm that families receiving care through these contracts are eligible to receive services according to state and federal regulations and EEC policies. In addition, the monitoring program corroborates contractor compliance by verifying financial information, confirming compliance with audits and evaluating internal controls.

- 1.2.4 Lead Agencies must assure that, to the extent practicable and appropriate, any code or software for child care information systems or information technology for which a Lead Agency or other agency expends CCDF funds to develop must be made available on request to other public agencies, including public agencies in other States, for their use in administering child care or related programs (98.15(a)(11)). Assure by describing how the Lead Agency makes child care information systems available to public agencies in other states to the extent practicable and appropriate. EEC does not currently utilize CCDF funding in the development of its child care information systems or information technology.
- 1.2.5 Lead Agencies must have in effect policies to govern the use and disclosure of confidential and personally-identifiable information about children and families receiving CCDF assistance and child care providers receiving CCDF funds (98.15(b)(13)). Certify by describing the Lead Agency's policies related to the use and disclosure of confidential and personally-identifiable information. EEC collects and maintains information about individuals who participate in EEC licensed and/or funded programs, including Licensees, Applicants, Registrants, program staff, program participants, and other stakeholders. The information is collected by EEC to carry out its Legislatively mandated functions of protecting the health and safety of children enrolled in EEC licensed and/or funded programs; ensuring that all children receive high quality early education and care services; preventing fraud, waste and abuse in EEC funded programs and initiatives; assisting families who need extra supports in their access to early education and care programs; and otherwise meeting EEC's legislative mandate of overseeing and regulating programs that affect the early education and care of children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as set forth in M.G.L. c. 15D. EEC is required by its licensing, subsidy, and Background Record Check regulations to collect certain personally identifiable information from individuals who participate in EEC licensed and/or funded programs and other EEC funded initiatives. The collection and dissemination of personally identifiable information is governed by the Public Records Law (M.G.L. c. 66, §10 and M.G.L. c. 4, §7, cl. 26), the Fair Information Practices Act (FIPA) (M.G.L. c. 66A and 801 CMR 3.00), the Security Breaches Statute (M.G.L. c. 93H), Executive Order 504, and other applicable laws and regulations, such as those dealing with Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) (G.L., c. 6, §§172, 172a and 175) and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect (G.L. c. 119, §§51A and 51B). Some of the information provided to EEC may be provided to a member of the public in response to a public records request made pursuant to M.G.L. c 66, §10. However, certain specific information is not considered a public record and is, therefore, exempt from disclosure. These exemptions are found in M.G.L. c. 4, §7, cl. 26. These exempt pieces of information include, but are not limited to, credit card numbers, Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), Social Security Number (SSN), Background Record Check Information, personnel information or medical information, and such information is not considered public for purposes of disclosure under a public records request. In addition, personally identifiable information submitted to EEC will be disclosed only to EEC and other Commonwealth employees, contractors, or officials with a "need to know" the information in order to fulfill their specific job responsibilities. They will only use the information to fulfill the Commonwealth's legal obligations, such as licensing and investigations, and to

answer questions, and respond to any requests for assistance. Personally identifiable information will not be re-disseminated by EEC unless EEC is legally authorized to do so.

1.3 Consultation in the Development of the CCDF Plan

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing the CCDF plan, which serves as the application for a 3-year implementation period. As part of the Plan development process, Lead Agencies must consult with the following:

(1) Appropriate representatives of units of general purpose local government—(658D(b)(2); 98.10(c); 98.12(b); 98.14(b)). General purpose local governments are defined by the U.S. Census at https://www.census.gov/newsroom/cspan/govts/20120301_cspan_govts_def_3.pdf.

(2) The State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act) (658E(c)(2)(R); 98.15(b)(1)) or similar coordinating body pursuant to 98.14(a)(1)(vii).

(3) Indian tribe(s) or tribal organization(s) within the state. This consultation should be done in a timely manner and at the option of the Indian tribe(s) or tribal organization(s) (658D(b)(1)(E)).

Consultation involves meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the state or territory CCDF Plan. Describe the partners engaged to provide services under the CCDF program in question 1.4.1.

1.3.1 Describe the Lead Agency's consultation in the development of the CCDF plan.

a) Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with appropriate representatives of general purpose local governments. EEC is overseen by an eleven member Board of Early Education and Care. In accordance with EEC's enabling act (M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3), membership of the Board shall include the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and nine individuals appointed by the Governor. Of the members appointed by the Governor, 1 shall be a representative of the business community with a demonstrated commitment to education; 1 shall be an early education and care teacher, selected from a list of 3 nominees jointly provided by the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers; 1 shall be a parent or guardian of a child receiving early education and care services or a family childcare provider; 1 shall be a provider of early education and care services with practical experience in the management and administration of early education and care programs; 1 shall be a person with expertise in the evaluation and assessment of successful pre-school education programs; 1 shall be a pediatrician with a focus on child development or a person nationally recognized for research in the field of educational psychology; and 3 shall be additional members. Pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws, the Board is required to review and approve all federal grant applications, including the CCDF Plan. The Board meets monthly to decide high-level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies, including representatives of general purpose local government. In developing the CCDF State Plan for FFY2019-2021, EEC consulted the Board on multiple occasions via presentations at Board meetings, review of materials including the previous plan, the Draft

pre-print from the federal government as well as drafts of and updates regarding the succeeding plan.

- b) Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the State Advisory Council. The EEC Board has been designated to serve as the State Advisory Council in Massachusetts. Additionally, the Massachusetts General Laws establish an Advisory Board to provide input and guidance into many aspects of the planning and implementation of agency activities. The Advisory Board is comprised of representatives of the following groups: legislators, agencies with a vendor or contract relationship with EEC, Business/ Civic, State associations, those with Kindergarten-Grade 12 Linkages. The Advisory Board meets 4 times per year. In developing the CCDF State Plan for FFY2019-2021, EEC consulted with and elicited feedback from the Advisory Council via presentations at meetings concerning the major CCDBG changes. EEC presented to the Advisory Council with materials for review including the previous plan, the Draft pre-print from the federal government, as well as drafts of and updates regarding the succeeding plan.
- c) Describe, if applicable, how the Lead Agency consulted with Indian tribes(s) or tribal organizations(s) within the state. There are two federally recognized tribes in the Commonwealth: the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, based in Martha's Vineyard; and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, based in Mashpee. EEC met with representatives from the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head along with representatives from the Office of Child Care ("OCC") in January 2018 for an initial meet and greet. From there, EEC created an outreach plan to establish and maintain a working relationship with the Wampanoag Tribe that promotes information and resource sharing, open communication and collaborative efforts that impact the educational foundation that supports children as lifelong learners and allows for collaboration and coordination with the Wampanoag Tribe with respect to the CCDBG requirements. The plan hopes to establish bi-annual meetings between representatives from EEC and the tribe with a focus on training and information sharing in specific topic areas, including licensing, health and safety, background record checks, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies ("CCRR"), Quality Rating Improvement System ("QRIS"), and EEC Grantees available to the tribes. EEC also reached out to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe but did not receive a commitment to meet.
- d) Describe any other entities, agencies, or organizations consulted on the development of the CCDF plan. n/a

1.3.2 Describe the statewide or territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan (658D(b)(1)(C); 98.16(f)). *Reminder:* Lead Agencies are required to hold at least one public hearing in the state or territory, with sufficient statewide or territory-wide distribution of notice prior to such a hearing to enable the public to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF Plan. At a minimum, this description must include:

- a) Date(s) of notice of a public hearing. May 9, 2018 *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 specific website links if used to provide notice. EEC posted notice regarding the public hearings on the CCDF State Plan on the Department's website, which requires compliance the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") for

purposes of accessibility. In addition, the information related to the dates and times for each of the public hearings was communicated to over 18,000 individuals that have signed up for regular e-mails from the Department's Commissioner's Office. Prior to the website posting and e-mail communication, EEC staff provided the Board with information about the hearings at the May 8, 2018 meeting of the Board.

- c) Date(s) of the public hearing(s). May 30, 2018 *Reminder:* Must be no earlier than January 1, 2018, which is 9 months prior to the October 1, 2018, effective date of the Plan.
- d) Hearing site(s) or method(s), including how geographic regions of the state or territory were addressed. EEC's central office at 51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02210
- e) How the content of the Plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s). A copy of the draft plan will be posted on EEC's website. In addition, EEC offers the citizens of the Commonwealth several opportunities throughout the year to provide feedback and to guide the direction of the agency. For example, EEC convenes an Advisory Council (codified in Massachusetts statute at M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3A) of key stakeholders in the realm of early education and care. On April 27, 2018, the CCDF State Plan was a topic of the State Advisory Council. Lastly, EEC provides opportunities for public comment prior to each board meeting, which occur a minimum of ten (10) times per year.
- f) How was the information provided by the public taken into consideration regarding the provision of child care services under this Plan? EEC will incorporate feedback generated from the public comment period.

1.3.3 Lead Agencies are required to make the submitted and final Plan, any Plan amendments, and any approved requests for temporary relief (i.e., waivers) publicly available on a website (98.14(d)).

- a) Provide the website link to where the plan, any plan amendments, and/or waivers are available. TBD
- b) Describe any other strategies that the Lead Agency uses to make the CCDF Plan and Plan amendments available to the public (98.14(d)). Check all that apply and describe the strategies below, including any relevant website links as examples.
 - Working with advisory committees. Describe: Massachusetts General Laws establish an Advisory Board to provide input and guidance into many aspects of the planning and implementation of agency activities. The Advisory Board is comprised of representatives of the following groups: legislators, agencies with a vendor or contract relationship with EEC, Business/ Civic, State associations, those with Kindergarten-Grade 12 Linkages. The Advisory Board meets 4 times per year. In developing the CCDF State Plan for FFY2019-2021, EEC consulted with and elicited feedback from the Advisory Board via presentations at meetings concerning the major CCDBG changes and the CCDF State Plan.
 - Working with child care resource and referral agencies. Describe: EEC attends monthly meetings of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Network, in order to share information, review updates on their work, and strategize regarding the implementation of any planned policy changes to CCDF supported care that may impact their work and the children and families that they serve.

Providing translation in other languages. Describe: The new <https://www.mass.gov> website has a Google translator button at the top of all web pages, including EEC's web pages, whereby users can translate the page content into 12 different languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.) In addition, EEC has translated a number of important documents for parents, programs/providers, and the public who may speak languages other than English.

Sharing through social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, email). Describe: _____

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

Other. Describe: _____

1.4 Coordination With Partners To Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

Lead Agencies are required to describe how the state or 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. This includes programs for the benefit of Indian children, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, children experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care (98.14(a)(1)).

1.4.1 Describe how the Lead Agency coordinates the provision of child care services with the following programs to expand accessibility and continuity of care and to assist children enrolled in early childhood programs in receiving full-day services that meet the needs of working families (658E(c)(2)(O); 98.12(a); 98.14(a)).

This list includes entities required by law or rule, along with a list of optional partners that Lead Agencies potentially would coordinate with over the next 3 years to expand accessibility and continuity of care and to assist children enrolled in early childhood programs in receiving full-day services.

Include in the descriptions 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 the quality of services; linking comprehensive services to children in child care settings; or developing the supply of quality care for vulnerable populations. Check who you will coordinate with and describe all that apply.

(REQUIRED) Appropriate representatives of the general purpose local government, which can include counties, municipalities, or townships/towns. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC is overseen by an eleven member Board of Early Education and Care. In accordance with EEC's enabling act (M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3), membership of the Board shall include the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and nine individuals appointed by the Governor. Of the members appointed by the Governor, 1 shall be a representative of the business community with a demonstrated commitment to education; 1 shall be an early education and care teacher, selected from a list of 3 nominees jointly provided by the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers; 1 shall be a

parent or guardian of a child receiving early education and care services or a family childcare provider; 1 shall be a provider of early education and care services with practical experience in the management and administration of early education and care programs; 1 shall be a person with expertise in the evaluation and assessment of successful pre-school education programs; 1 shall be a pediatrician with a focus on child development or a person nationally recognized for research in the field of educational psychology; and 3 shall be additional members. Pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws, the Board is required to review and approve all federal grant applications, including the CCDF Plan. The Board meets monthly to decide high-level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies, including representatives of general purpose local government.

In developing the CCDF State Plan for FFY2016-2018, EEC consulted the Board on multiple occasions via presentations at Board meetings, review of materials including the previous plan, the Draft pre-print from the federal government as well as drafts of and updates regarding the succeeding plan.

(REQUIRED) State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (or similar coordinating body) (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act). Describe the coordination goals and process: The EEC Board has been designated to serve as the State Advisory Council in Massachusetts.

Additionally, EEC has established an advisory council on early education and care pursuant to M.G.L. c. 15D, § 3A, that consists of members of which shall represent a reasonable geographic balance and shall reflect the diversity of the commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Members of the advisory council shall, at minimum, include 1 person from each of the following organizations, or their successor organizations, if applicable: Child Development and Education, Inc., the Massachusetts Head Start Association; the Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children; the Massachusetts Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators; the Massachusetts Association of School Committees; the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association; the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools; the Massachusetts Teachers Association; the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts; the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education; the Massachusetts Association of Community Partnerships for Children, Inc.; Strategies for Children/Early Education for All; the Child Care Resource and Referral Network; the Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies; the Massachusetts Independent Child Care Organization; Associated Early Care and Education; BostNET; the YMCAs of Massachusetts; the United Way of Massachusetts Bay; the Massachusetts After-School Partnership; Parents Alliance for Catholic Education; Together for Kids Coalition; Horizons for Homeless Children; the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; the Federation of Children With Special Needs; the Bureau of Jewish Education; the Boston Institute for the Development of

Infants and Parents; the Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium; and a family child care provider chosen by the commissioner.

The council shall be further composed of 8 members, 3 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives, 3 of whom shall be appointed by the president of the senate, and 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate. Additional advisory members may also be recommended by the commissioner and appointed by the board. All appointees shall have a special expertise or interest in high quality early childhood education and care and shall represent a mix of representatives of the early childhood community, the civic, labor, and business communities, academics, parents, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers.

The advisory council meets 4 times per year and may review and offer comments on any rules or regulations before promulgation by the board, and may, from time to time, make recommendations to the board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services.

In developing the CCDF State Plan for FFY2016-2018, EEC consulted the Advisory on one occasion via a presentation at the April 27, 2018 Advisory Council Meeting, which consisted of a review of materials including proposed changes in the succeeding plan.

Does the Lead Agency have official representation and a decision-making role in the State Advisory Council (or similar coordinating body)?

No

Yes

(REQUIRED) Indian tribe(s) and/or tribal organization(s), at the option of individual tribes. Describe the coordination goals and process, including which tribe(s) was consulted: EEC has engaged the two tribal organizations in Massachusetts, the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head in Martha's Vineyard and the Mashpee Wampanoag of Mashpee. EEC met with the Gay Head Tribe in February 2018 in a successful first meeting that allowed both EEC and the Wampanoag Tribe to gain a better understanding of how each other's programs operate. From there, EEC and the Wampanoag Tribe agreed that additional meetings would be beneficial to further explore this relationship and how each organization can work together to meet our needs. EEC prepared a proposal that includes bi-annual meetings between EEC and the Tribe that will focus on training and information sharing with the goal of maintaining a working relationship that open communication and collaborative efforts that impact the educational foundation that supports children as lifelong learners. EEC anticipates that the kick-off meeting will take place in May 2018.

EEC also reached out to the Mashpee Tribe on several occasions, but did not receive a commitment to meet.

N/A—There are no Indian tribes and/or tribal organizations in the State.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency(ies) responsible for programs for children with special needs, including early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool). Describe the coordination goals and process: The Department of Public Health (DPH), which sits within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), is the Lead Agency responsible for administering Part C of the IDEA, whereas Part B of the IDEA is administered by ESE, which sits within EOE. The Secretaries of both EOHHS and EOE serve as ex officio members of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies. In addition, ESE entered into an interagency service agreement (ISA) with EEC related to the administration of the IDEA, Part B, funds. Pursuant to this ISA, EEC will administer these funds to support the inclusion of young children with disabilities through the implementation of a high quality system of early education and care, and to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to all eligible children with disabilities ages 3 to 5 in compliance with applicable federal and state special education law. EEC has also partnered with DPH's Early Intervention Services program to establish and support Regional Consultation Programs (RCPs) to assist children with disabilities by providing expertise on inclusion and effective transition practices to early education and care programs. EEC is also a participating member of DPH's Interagency Collaborating Council (ICC), which is a federally mandated statewide inter-agency group that advises and assists DPH on issues related to Early Intervention services

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory office/director for Head Start state collaboration. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC is the agency that receives and administers the Head Start State Collaboration Grant in MA. The HSSCO is funded by the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) through the Office of Head Start (OHS). The Collaboration Office provides a structure and a process for OHS to work with State agencies and local entities to leverage their common interests around young children and their families to formulate, implement, and improve state and local policy and practice.

☒ (REQUIRED) State agency responsible for public health, including the agency responsible for immunizations. Describe the coordination goals and process: DPH, which sits within EOHHS, is the lead agency responsible for public health in the Commonwealth. The Secretary of EOHHS serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies.

☒ (REQUIRED) State agency responsible for employment services/workforce development. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Labor & Workforce Development Secretariat along with several

other agencies, including the Executive of Education (EOE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) for the purpose of implementing new research and reporting tools designed to enhance evidence-based policymaking for the Commonwealth's education and career development pipeline. Under this MOU, relevant state Secretariats and Agencies are partnering to match individual student and wage records over time in order to analyze and better understand the relationship between the public education and training systems and the economy. The MOU serves as an overarching guide to allow the education departments to enter into specific data-sharing agreements with agencies more expeditiously and with greater consistency as the document establishes definitions, privacy and security expectations, and other common terms.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for public education, including prekindergarten (preK). Describe the coordination goals and process: In Massachusetts, the Executive Office of Education's (EOE) primary function is to advance public education in the Commonwealth by analyzing and implementing statewide education policy and developing a seamless education system from birth through higher education, which includes the Commonwealth's three education agencies: EEC, Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), and Higher Education (DHE). The Secretary of EOE serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high-level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies, especially in regards to the development of the CCDF State Plan.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for child care licensing. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC is the state agency responsible for licensing in Massachusetts

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and other relevant nutrition programs. Describe the coordination goals and process: ESE, which sits within EOE, is the lead agency responsible for administering the CACFP in Massachusetts. The Secretary of EOE serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies.

☒ (REQUIRED) McKinney-Vento state coordinators for homeless education and other agencies providing services for children experiencing homelessness and, to the extent practicable, local McKinney-Vento liaisons. Describe the coordination goals and process: ESE, which sits within EOE, is the lead agency responsible for administering the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act in Massachusetts. The Secretary of EOE serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and

regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies. In addition, EEC met with representatives from ESE on multiple occasions to discuss data sharing and inform policies on how EEC can utilize homelessness liaisons to assist in identifying families that meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for employment services and workforce development. Describe the coordination goals and process: Duplicate question.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Describe the coordination goals and process: The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), which sits within EOHHS, is the lead agency responsible for TANF in the Commonwealth. The Secretary of EOHHS serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies. In addition, EEC and DTA meet on a monthly basis to discuss ongoing policy issues, including reforms necessary to meet the challenges and opportunities set forth in the CCDBG Reauthorization Act of 2014.

☒ (REQUIRED) Agency responsible for Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC is a partner in the MassHealth Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI), to ensure that children with MassHealth coverage, who have significant behavioral, emotional and mental health needs and their families get the services they need for success in home, school, community, and throughout life.

☒ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for mental health. Describe the coordination goals and process: The Department of Mental Health (DMH), which sits within EOHHS, is the lead agency responsible for mental health in the Commonwealth. The Secretary of EOHHS serves as an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies.

☒ (REQUIRED) Child care resource and referral agencies, child care consumer education organizations, and providers of early childhood education training and professional development. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC attends monthly meetings of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Network, in order to share information, review updates on their work, and strategize regarding the implementation of any planned policy changes to CCDF supported care that may impact their work and the children and families that they serve

☒ (REQUIRED) Statewide afterschool network or other coordinating entity for out-of-school time care (if applicable). Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC shared its draft plan

with its Advisory Council, which consists of several members for the early education field, including representatives from the afterschool network and out-of-school time care network.

(REQUIRED) Agency responsible for emergency management and response. Describe the coordination goals and process: EEC intends to share its disaster preparedness and response plan with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for feedback when it is completed.

The following are examples of optional partners a state might coordinate with to provide services. Check all that apply.

State/territory/local agencies with Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grants. Describe: The Head Start State Collaboration Office Director coordinates the partnership between EEC and the state's Early Head Start Partnerships. The Director is directly involved in the drafting of the Department's CCDF Plan.

State/territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges. Describe: The Department of Higher Education (DHE), which sits within the Executive office of Education (EOE), is the lead agency in charge of oversight of state and community colleges. EEC works with this DHE in a number of ways including educational offerings and requirements for educators as well as campuses that have early education and care facilities on site.

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: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health was designated as the lead agency for the Massachusetts Home Visiting Initiative (MHVI). The Department of Early Education and Care, the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund, the Department of Children and Families, and the Head Start Collaboration Office are collaborating agencies for this MHVI project. As mentioned above DPH resides within the Health and Human Secretariat and the EOHHS Secretary (or their designee) sits on the EEC Board.

Agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment. Describe:

State/territory agency responsible for child welfare. Describe: The Department of Children and Families (DCF) within EOHHS is the lead agency responsible for child welfare in the Commonwealth. The Secretary of EOHHS is an ex officio member of the Board of EEC, which meets a minimum of ten times annually to decide high level policy issues, including issues impacting all CCDF funded programs and services. The broad membership and regular meeting schedule of the EEC Board allows for substantial and ongoing consultation and coordination with EEC's stakeholders and key partner agencies. In addition, EEC and DCF meet on a monthly basis to discuss challenges and opportunities related to child care subsidies/services provided to children and families with open DCF protective service cases.

- State/territory liaison for military child care programs. Describe:
- Provider groups or associations. Describe:
- Parent groups or organizations. Describe:
- Other. Describe:

1.5 Optional Use of Combined Funds, CCDF Matching and Maintenance-of-Effort Funds

Optional Use of Combined Funds: 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 programs include those 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 to expand and/or enhance services for children and families to allow for the delivery of comprehensive 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 a 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 prekindergarten requirements in addition to state/territory child care licensing requirements.

As a reminder, CCDF funds may be used in collaborative efforts with Head Start programs to provide comprehensive child care and development services for children who are eligible for both programs. In fact, the coordination and collaboration between the Head Start and CCDF is strongly encouraged by sections 640(g)(1)(D) and (E); 640(h); 641(d)(2)(H)(v); and 642(e)(3) of the Head Start Act in the provision of full working day, full calendar year comprehensive services. To implement such collaborative programs, which share, for example, space, equipment, or materials, grantees may layer several funding streams so that seamless services are provided (Policy and Program Guidance for the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/acf_im_ohs_15_03.pdf).

1.5.1 Does the Lead Agency choose to combine funding for CCDF services for any required early childhood program (98.14(a)(3))?

No.

Yes. If yes, describe at a minimum:

- a) How you define “combine” Massachusetts pools together federal and state funds that support the services provided by EEC. Through the child care subsidy program, Massachusetts provides for "wrap-around" services, which enable full day/full year services for children participating in other federal or state funded educational opportunities (i.e., Head Start, public pre-school, and school age children attending public or private school within the K-12 education system).

- b) Which funds you will combine Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF), Temporary Aid to Need Families (TANF), Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), and state appropriated funds.
- c) Your purpose and expected outcomes for combining funds, 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 Massachusetts pools funds to maximize federal revenue for the Commonwealth and to support full day/full year child care opportunities for children in the child care subsidy program.
- d) How you will be combining multiple sets of funding, such as at the State/Territory level, local level, program level? Massachusetts pools funds at the State level.
- e) How are the funds tracked and method of oversight Funds are tracked by the finance unit of EEC and are allocated through the federal draw process. Both the method of allocation and the draw process are subject to internal and external audit.

Use of PreK for Maintenance of Effort: The CCDF final rule clarifies that public preK funds may also serve as maintenance-of-effort funds as long as the state/territory can describe how it will coordinate preK and child care services to expand the availability of child care while using public preK funds as no more than 20 percent of the state’s or territory’s maintenance of effort or 30 percent of its matching funds in a single fiscal year (FY) (98.55(h)). If expenditures for preK services are used to meet the maintenance-of-effort requirement, the state/territory must certify that it has not reduced its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services (98.55(h)(1); 98.15(a)(6)).

Use of Private Funds for Match or Maintenance of Effort: Donated funds do not need to be under the administrative control of the Lead Agency to qualify as an expenditure for federal match. However, Lead Agencies do need to identify and designate in the state/territory Plan the donated funds given to public or private entities to implement the child care program (98.55(f)).

1.5.2 Which of the following funds does the Lead Agency intend to use to meet the CCDF matching and MOE requirements described in 98.55(e) and 98.55(h)? Check all that apply.

Note: The Lead Agency must check at least public and/or private funds as matching, even if preK funds also will be used.

- N/A—The territory is not required to meet CCDF matching and MOE requirements
- Public funds are used to meet the CCDF matching fund requirement. Public funds may include any general revenue funds, county or other local public funds, state/territory-specific funds (tobacco tax, lottery), or any other public funds.

If checked, identify the source of funds: General Revenue Funds

If known, identify the estimated amount of public funds that the Lead Agency will receive: \$ The exact amount is unknown but there will be a sufficient amount to meet the MOE and Matching Requirements.

Private donated funds are used to meet the CCDF matching funds requirement. Only private funds received by the designated entities or by the Lead Agency may be counted for match purposes (98.53(f)).

If checked, are those funds:

donated directly to the State?

donated to a separate entity(ies) designated to receive private donated funds?

If checked, identify the name, address, contact, and type of entities designated to receive private donated funds:

If known, identify the estimated amount of private donated funds that the Lead Agency will receive: \$

State expenditures for preK programs are used to meet the CCDF matching funds requirement. If checked, provide the estimated percentage of the matching fund requirement that will be met with preK expenditures (not to exceed 30 percent):

If the percentage is more than 10 percent of the matching fund requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its preK and child care services:

If known, identify the estimated amount of preK funds that the Lead Agency will receive for the matching funds requirement: \$

Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that preK programs meet the needs of working parents:

State expenditures for preK programs are used to meet the CCDF maintenance-of-effort requirements. If checked,

The Lead Agency assures that its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to 98.55(h)(1) and 98.15(6).

No

Yes

Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that preK programs meet the needs of working parents:

Estimated percentage of the MOE Fund requirement that will be met with preK expenditures (not to exceed 20 percent):

If the percentage is more than 10 percent of the MOE requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its preK and child care services to expand the availability of child care:

If known, identify the estimated amount of preK funds that the Lead Agency will receive for the MOE Fund requirement: \$

1.6 Public-Private Partnerships

Lead Agencies are required to describe how they encourage public-private partnerships among other public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith-based organizations, businesses or organizations that promote business involvement, and/or community-based organizations to leverage existing service delivery (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 the CCDBG Act. Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate how they encourage public-private partnerships to leverage existing child care and early education service-delivery systems and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children younger than age 13, for example, by implementing voluntary shared service alliance models (98.14(a)(4)).

- 1.6.1 Identify and describe the entities with which and the levels at which the state/territory is partnering (level—state/territory, county/local, and/or programs), the goals of the partnerships, the ways that partnerships are expected to leverage existing service-delivery systems, the method of partnering, and examples of activities that have resulted from these partnerships (98.16(d)(2)). The Massachusetts Head Start Collaboration Director has partnered with the United Way DRIVE program for two years. The DRIVE initiative is a collaboration between United Way and Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD). By partnering with the United Way DRIVE initiative, ABCD has enhanced its use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), which is the screening tool that is completed for all children within 45 days of enrollment. By joining United Way's DRIVE project with other Boston partner agencies, ABCD has free access to ASQ and ASQ-SE online and reporting tools, so that ABCD can track how children are doing in all of their programs, what the individual program needs are, and how programs can better meet the needs of families and children. To ensure that this partnership would benefit ABCD without creating additional work and maintaining the confidentiality of all children, the United Way staff have met with the Massachusetts Head Start Collaboration Director, ABCD's Vice President of Head Start & Children Services, and ABCD's Disability/Mental Health Coordinator to discuss how ABCD will be engaged and supported with this exciting data project. United Way produces reports of ABCD's ASQ and ASQ-SE data in the aggregate (with no child or family names attached), and ABCD is able to use the data/graphs and charts when seeking out additional grant-funding opportunities. ABCD programs can use the ASQ and ASQ-SE data to identify specific areas of program improvements and plan training/professional development for early educators and families. ABCD's partnership with the United Way DRIVE project is helping to reach a larger number of children in Boston that receive screenings, since ABCD Head Start program serves over 2,400 low-income children. This Public-Private DRIVE initiative has accomplished the following: Collected developmental screening data from over 6,000 children ages 0-5. Among children rescreened after one year, over 72% progressed from showing strong or potential concern to developing on track; Trained and supported 20 parent screeners and partnered with 25 Early Education and community-based programs across 60 sites in Greater Boston to build the infrastructure for collecting screening data; Developed a technology platform to aggregate data and generate program, neighborhood, and community-level data

reports; Influenced the activities and opportunities that community-based organizations are providing for families with young children.

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

Lead Agencies may use CCDF funds to establish or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral (CCR&R) organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined by the state/territory, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization (such as a statewide CCR&R network) (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii); 98.52).

- If Lead Agencies use CCDF funds for local CCR&R organizations, the local or regional CCR&R organizations supported by those funds must, at the direction of the Lead Agency, provide parents in the State with consumer education information concerning the full range of child care options (including faith-based and community-based child care providers), analyzed by provider, including child care provided during non-traditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their area.
- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance to offer the families support and assistance to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting that suits their needs and one that is of high quality (as determined by the Lead Agency).
- Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in areas of the state and submit the information to the State;
- Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the state and, as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the state Lead Agency and local agencies that administer funds made available through CCDF (98.52(b)).

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

Note: Use section 7.6 to address how quality set-aside funds, if applicable, are used to support a statewide CCR&R system.

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

No. The state/territory does not fund a CCR&R system and has no plans to establish one.

Yes. The state/territory funds a CCR&R system. If yes, describe the following:

- a) What services are provided through the CCR&R system? The current CCRR contract focuses its resources on the following areas: (1) families have access to high quality information, resources, and referrals that meet their specific needs and access to high quality management of EEC subsidized care; (2) provider services including recruitment and contract management, training and technical assistance, and monitoring; (3)

coordination with other agencies and programs, including EEC Regional Operations/Licensing, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Mass211, Coordinated Family Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees, Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grantees, and service area communities and the early education field; and (4) general CCRR administration and management. EEC can provide a copy of the full request for response issued as part of the most recent CCRR procurement upon request.

b) How the CCR&R system is operated, including how many agencies and if there is a statewide network and how the system is coordinated. There are seven CCRRs contracted by EEC who also operate as a statewide network. EEC holds brief calls every week with the Network to coordinate urgent priorities. The Network also holds longer monthly meetings with each other and EEC to coordinate efforts across the Commonwealth.

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

Lead Agencies are required to establish a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan (658E(c)(2)(U)). They must demonstrate how they will address the needs of children—including the need for safe child care, before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as defined by Section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122)—through a Statewide Disaster Plan that, for a State, is developed in collaboration with the State human services agency, the State emergency management agency, the State licensing agency, the State health department or public health department, local and State child care resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))) or similar coordinating body (98.16(aa)).

1.8.1 Describe how the Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan was developed in collaboration with the State human services agency, the State emergency management agency, the State licensing agency, the State health department or public health department, local and State child care resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care or similar coordinating body: Massachusetts is in the process of revising its Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan which was developed in 2009 but was not implemented in the field. EEC still needs to meet with other state agencies, the child care resource & referral network, and its State Advisory Council to complete and finalize the plan.

1.8.2 Describe how the Statewide Disaster Plan includes the Lead Agency's guidelines for the continuation of child care subsidies and child care services, which may include the provision of emergency and temporary child care services during a disaster and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster: Massachusetts is in the process of revising its Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan which was developed in 2009 but was not implemented in the field. This includes updating the continuation of child care subsidies. However, the existing draft contains procedures regarding the provision of emergency and temporary child care services during a disaster and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster. This includes

gathering information at the regional level about licensed child care providers and how they were impacted by the disaster, developing a needs assessment plan with EEC's Central Office team and other state agencies, as needed, and determining if supplemental temporary child care arrangements are needed by either expanding licensed capacity of existing providers/programs, utilizing staff from programs temporarily closed, and/or establishing temporary child care arrangements set up through the Office of Head Start or other partners.

- 1.8.3 Describe Lead Agency procedures for the coordination of post-disaster recovery of child care services: Massachusetts is in the process of revising its Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan which was developed in 2009 but was not implemented in the field. However, the existing draft contains procedures regarding the coordination of post-disaster recovery of child care services such as the activation of special licensing variances on a case-by-case basis. Regional licensing staff will assess and provide technical assistance to programs and providers as to whether facilities can continue to operate, must temporarily close/reduce enrollment, or relocate. In the event of relocation, licensors may help to reestablish licensed care on a temporary basis in a new, approved location. Additionally, if local child care is impacted, regional offices can expand capacity of existing child care providers who are willing to provide care for additional children.
- 1.8.4 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that providers who receive CCDF funds have the following procedures in place—evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place; lockdown; communications with and reunification of families; continuity of operations; and accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions: The Commonwealth has licensing regulations and policies related to disasters and other emergency situations that address such matters as evacuations, sheltering in place and missing children. The policy is located on EEC's website at: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/licensing/policies/emergency-contingency-plan.pdf>. All licensed programs in the Commonwealth are required by regulation to have a written plan detailing procedures for meeting potential emergencies which must be kept current, meet the needs of all children in care including infants and toddlers, and any children with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions.
- 1.8.5 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that providers who receive CCDF funds have the following procedures in place for child care staff and volunteers—emergency preparedness training and practice drills as required in 98.41(a)(1)(vii): All licensed programs in the Commonwealth are required by regulation to conduct practice evacuation drills with all groups of children and educators from each floor level of the approved program space at least monthly. Drills must be held at different times of the program day, using different exits. The program must document the date, the time, the exit route used, the number of children evacuated and the effectiveness of each drill. Copies of the drill logs are reviewed by licensing staff during monitoring visits.
- 1.8.6 Provide the link to the website where the statewide child care disaster plan is available: At this time, there is no link to the disaster plan. Massachusetts is in the process of revising its

Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan which was developed in 2009 but was not implemented in the field.

2 Promote Family Engagement Through Outreach and Consumer Education

Lead Agencies are required to support the role of parents as child care consumers who need information to make informed choices regarding the services that best suit their needs. A key purpose of the CCDBG Act is to “promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings” (658A(b)). Lead Agencies have the opportunity to consider how information can be provided to parents through the child care assistance system, partner agencies, and child care consumer education websites.

The target audience for the consumer education information includes three groups: parents receiving CCDF assistance, the general public, and when appropriate, child care providers. In this section, Lead Agencies will address how information is made available to families to assist them in accessing high-quality child care and how information is shared on other financial assistance programs or supports for which a family might be eligible. In addition, Lead Agencies will certify that information on developmental screenings is provided and will describe how research and best practices concerning children’s development, including their social-emotional development, is shared.

In this section, Lead Agencies will delineate the consumer and provider education information related to child care, as well as other services, including developmental screenings, that is made available to parents, providers, and the general public and the ways that it is made available. This section also covers the parental complaint process and the consumer education website that has been developed by the Lead Agency and the manner in which it links to the national website and hotline. Finally, this section addresses the consumer statement that is provided to parents supported with CCDF funds.

2.1 Outreach to Families With Limited English Proficiency and Persons With Disabilities

The Lead Agency is required to describe how it provides outreach and services to eligible families with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities and to facilitate the participation of child care providers with limited English proficiency and disabilities in the CCDF program (98.16(dd)). Lead Agencies are required to develop policies and procedures to clearly communicate program information, such as requirements, consumer education information, and eligibility information, to families and child care providers of all backgrounds (81 FR 67456).

- 2.1.1 Describe how the Lead Agency or partners provide outreach and services to eligible families for whom English is not their first language: EEC has partnered with WIDA to offer online training modules for early educators who work with children who are English language learners, ages 2.5 to 5.5 years old. WIDA is a national organization that advances academic language development and achievement for children and youth who are culturally and linguistically diverse through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators. The English language learner training modules provide opportunities for early educators to learn new instructional content and apply it to practice . As part of the WIDA model, resources like

“ABCs of Family Engagement: Key Considerations for Building Relationships with Families and Strengthening Family Engagement Practices,” are available for early childhood educators to build on their overall effectiveness with families. Also, many subsidy administrators working directly with families have bilingual staff in the primary language of their clients to provide services in the family's native language. When there is no bilingual staff present, EEC staff and subsidy administrators have access to telephonic translation services to better serve families whose first language is not English. EEC has worked with the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants to create the list of most common spoken languages for our subsidy families and, subject to available funding, EEC has dedicated resources for the translation of documents into these primary languages.

- 2.1.2 Describe how the Lead Agency or partners provide outreach and services to eligible families with a person(s) with a disability: EEC provides families with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. In addition to providing all of the information about child care options, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, DESE, DPH, the DMH, DTA, DCF, and the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials. Parents with disabilities are also included with the Commonwealth's definition of "protective services", as a result, parents with disabilities may qualify for CCDF child care subsidies without participating in an approved activity for up to two years upon approval by EEC. Furthermore, the child care licensing regulations establish requirements related to requests for reasonable accommodations for any child enrolled in an early education program subject to EEC licensure. For children receiving CCDF with special needs/disabilities, EEC has limited flexible funding available on a first come, first served, case-by-case basis to provide temporary financial support to programs to successfully transition and include a subsidized child with disabilities/special needs. Appropriate fund use may include: consultation to identify necessary supports for the child, training for program staff, specialized equipment, or a temporary aide position to enhance staffing. EEC considers this funding as a temporary and preparatory step and expects a program to integrate any funded accommodations into its regular practice, in order to enhance the program's ability to better meet the child's needs. Through funding from DESE and an Interagency Service Agreement from EEC to DPH's Regional Consultation Program (RCPs,) resources are available to families to facilitate transitions from Early Intervention to Early Education and Care Programs and to support children eligible for Special Education Services. In addition, the RCPs support children with disabilities and their families who participate in Early Education and Care programs in an ongoing way.

2.2 Parental Complaint Process

The Lead Agency must certify that the state/territory maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request (658E(c)(2)(C); 98.15(b)(3)). Lead Agencies must also provide a detailed description of the hotline or similar reporting process for parents to submit complaints about child care providers; the process for substantiating complaints; the manner in which the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints; and ways that the Lead Agency makes information on such parental complaints available to the public on request (98.16; 98.32).

- 2.2.1 Describe the Lead Agency's hotline or similar reporting process through which parents can submit complaints about child care providers, including a link if it is a Web-based process: Massachusetts does not have a dedicated hotline at this time. However, parents or the general public who have a complaint are encouraged to call EEC's regional offices, EEC's Central Office, or email the Commissioner's office with their concerns.
- 2.2.2 Describe the Lead Agency's process for screening, substantiating and responding to complaints regarding CCDF providers, including whether the process includes monitoring: EEC reviews all matters that are reported to determine whether they will be screened in as a complaint. EEC defines substantiated complaint as any regulatory non-compliance that is related to a complaint received by the Department. A response to a complaint may result in an unannounced monitoring visit or an investigation, depending upon the severity of the allegations raised in the complaint. If the unannounced visit or investigation resulted in non-compliances unrelated to the initial complaint allegation, the non-compliances would not be considered a substantiated complaint. Through its statewide computerized tracking system, EEC logs and tracks all complaints, incidents and other information that it receives about licensed CCDF child care providers from a variety of sources, such as parents, concerned individuals, other state agencies and providers themselves. Substantiated parental complaints are not tracked by any separate means.
- 2.2.3 Describe the Lead Agency's process for screening, substantiating and responding to complaints for non-CCDF providers, including whether the process includes monitoring: EEC reviews all matters that are reported to determine whether they will be screened in as a complaint. EEC defines substantiated complaint as any regulatory non-compliance that is related to a complaint received by the Department. A response to a complaint may result in an unannounced monitoring visit or an investigation, depending upon the severity of the allegations raised in the complaint. If the unannounced visit or investigation resulted in non-compliances unrelated to the initial complaint allegation, the non-compliances would not be considered a substantiated complaint. Through its statewide computerized tracking system, EEC logs and tracks all complaints, incidents and other information that it receives about non-CCDF child care providers from a variety of sources, such as parents, concerned individuals, other state agencies and providers themselves. Substantiated parental complaints are not tracked by any separate means.

- 2.2.4 Certify by describing how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints: Records related to substantiated parental complaints are maintained electronically for an indefinite period of time. All electronic records may be reproduced in hard copy, as needed. Hard copies of records are generally kept in a provider file, at EEC for a minimum of 5 years, then archived for 21 years.
- 2.2.5 Certify by describing how the Lead Agency makes information about substantiated parental complaints available to the public; this information can include the consumer education website discussed in section 2.3: Upon request, EEC may release reports from complaint investigations and monitoring visits, as such records are considered public records. See M.G.L. c. 66, §10. Prior to releasing any reports to the public, EEC staff review the records to ensure any personally identifiable, confidential or statutorily protected information/data is redacted (i.e., identity of complainants, references to supported abuse or neglect allegations, social security numbers, etc.). See M.G.L. c. 4, §7, cl. 26 (c), (e) and (f), M.G.L. c. 66A and M.G.L. c. 93H

2.3 Consumer Education Website

States and Territories are required to provide information to parents, the general public, and when applicable, child care providers through a State website, which is consumer-friendly and easily accessible (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(III)). The website must include information to assist families in understanding the policies and procedures for licensing child care providers. The website information must also include provider-specific information, monitoring and inspection reports for the provider, the quality of each provider (if such information is available for the provider), and the availability of the provider (658E(c)(2)(D); 98.33(a)). The website should also provide access to a yearly statewide report on deaths, serious injuries, and the number of cases of substantiated child abuse that have occurred in child care settings. To assist families with any additional questions, the website should provide contact information for local child care resource and referral organizations and any other agencies that can assist families in better understanding the information on the website.

To certify, respond to questions 2.3.1 through 2.3.10 by describing how the Lead Agency meets these requirements and provide the link in 2.3.11. Please note that any changes made to the web links provided below in this section after the CCDF Plan is approved are considered substantial changes and CCDF Plan Amendments will be required.

- 2.3.1 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that its website is consumer-friendly and easily accessible: In October 2017, Governor Charlie Baker's administration launched a new website for state agencies under the Mass.gov domain. EEC elected to participate in the pilot of the new website. The new mass.gov platform was designed to better serve constituent needs in the digital age. The framework and page layout design was developed through pilot tests, user research and public feedback. The new mass.gov website works well with both high-speed connections and pay-as-you go wireless data plans, and has better functionality on more devices than the previous version. New standards on the site make search results richer, including information like addresses, phone numbers and hours of operation. When the new website was in the development stage, it was tested by users from urban, suburban, and rural areas from every part of Massachusetts, and hundreds of users provided feedback to user experience

researchers through over a dozen tests. The new Mass.gov is continually being improved through dashboards that give the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security continuous feedback from constituents on how web content performs. The URL for EEC's new website is: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-early-education-and-care>, and the URL for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' new website is: <https://www.mass.gov>.

2.3.2 Describe how the website ensures the widest possible access to services for families that speak languages other than English (98.33(a)): [The new https://www.mass.gov website has a Google translator button at the top of all web pages, including EEC's web pages, whereby users can translate the page content into 12 different languages \(Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.\)](https://www.mass.gov) In addition, EEC has translated a number of important documents for parents, programs/providers, and the public who may speak languages other than English.

2.3.3 Describe how the website ensures the widest possible access to services for persons with disabilities: [EEC's website follows specific Commonwealth enterprise standards designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The Commonwealth enterprise standards are generally based on standards used by the federal government for technology accessibility for people with disabilities, as well as web content accessibility guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\). Mass.gov is regularly tested using leading web accessibility technologies and reviewed by users to verify that the website is compliant with applicable standards.](#)

2.3.4 Lead Agency processes related to child care.

A required component of the consumer education website is a description of Lead Agency policies and procedures relating to child care (98.33(a) (1)). This information includes a description of how the state/territory licenses child care, a rationale for exempting providers from licensing requirements, the procedure for conducting monitoring and inspections of providers, and the policies and procedures related to criminal background checks.

- a) Provide the link to how the Lead Agency licenses child care providers, including the rationale for exempting certain providers from licensing requirements, as described in section 5.3.6: <https://www.mass.gov/child-care-program-licensing-and-teacher-certification>. EEC has not yet included information regarding its rationale for exempting certain providers from licensing requirements.
- b) Provide the link to the procedure for conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers, as described in section 5.3.2: [EEC has not yet posted its procedure for conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers.](#)
- c) Provide the link to the policies and procedures related to criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers and the offenses that prevent individuals from being employed by a child care provider or receiving CCDF funds, as described in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.6: <https://www.mass.gov/eec-background-record-checks-brc>. EEC is in the process of revising its existing background record check regulations and policies to address the new CCDBG requirements, including listing those offenses that prevent individuals from being employed by a child care provider or receiving CCDF funds.

2.3.5 List of providers

The consumer education website must include a list of all licensed providers and, at the discretion of the Lead Agency, all providers eligible to deliver CCDF services, identified as either licensed or license-exempt. Providers caring for children to whom they are related do not need to be included. The list of providers should be searchable by ZIP Code.

a) Provide the website link to the searchable list of child care providers:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/find-a-licensed-family-school-age-or-center-based-child-care-program>.

b) Which providers are included in the searchable list of child care providers:

- Licensed CCDF providers
- Licensed non-CCDF providers
- License-exempt center-based CCDF providers
- License-exempt family child care (FCC) CCDF providers
- License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- Relative CCDF child care providers
- Other. Describe: _____

c) Describe what information is available in the search results. Specify if the information is different for different types of providers: For both family child care programs and center based programs, the search information provided includes general information about the program, including licensed capacity, when the program first received its license, when the license was most recently renewed, the regional office out of which the program is licensed and the name of the assigned licensor. The search information also includes the location of the program, contact information for the program director, languages spoken, program environment and meals, whether the program accepts financial assistance, special skills, knowledge of special needs, education (typically of the family child care educator), accreditation, access to transportation, schedule options and hours of operation. Some programs may choose to include a fee schedule based upon week or month. Both program types include information about the local child care resource and referral agency.

2.3.6 Lead Agencies must also identify specific quality information on each child care provider for whom they have this information. The type of information provided is determined by the Lead Agency, and it should help families easily understand whether a provider offers services that meet Lead Agency-specific best practices and standards or a nationally recognized, research-based set of criteria. Provider-specific quality information must only be posted on the consumer website if it is available for the individual provider.

a) How does the Lead Agency determine quality ratings or other quality information to include on the website?

- Quality rating and improvement system
- National accreditation
- Enhanced licensing system
- Meeting Head Start/Early Head Start requirements

Meeting prekindergarten quality requirements

Other. Describe: At this time, EEC has not included quality ratings as part of the information that is included with the program profiles on its website. EEC has retained a consulting firm that developed: (1) a comprehensive communications strategy with an easily-recognized brand identity to communicate quality/QRIS, including a new name for the MA QRIS, a new name for the MA QRIS tiers, and a consumer friendly logo for the MA QRIS; (2) a comprehensive communications strategy to communicate the importance of quality early education and care; (3) materials related to a comprehensive marketing/communication strategy: print, digital, radio, video, social media, and any other media identified in marketing/communication strategy, which must be in accessible format; and (4) printed materials to be translated into Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Simplified Chinese, and Vietnamese. EEC expects to include this information on its website when the new, revised, QRIS is launched

b) For what types of providers are quality ratings or other indicators of quality available?

Licensed CCDF providers. Describe the quality information: At this time, EEC has not included quality ratings as part of the information that is included with the program profiles on its website. EC expects to include this information on its website when the new, revised, QRIS is launched.

Licensed non-CCDF providers. Describe the quality information: At this time, EEC has not included quality ratings as part of the information that is included with the program profiles on its website. EC expects to include this information on its website when the new, revised, QRIS is launched.

License-exempt center-based CCDF providers. Describe the quality information: At this time, EEC has not included quality ratings as part of the information that is included with the program profiles on its website. EC expects to include this information on its website when the new, revised, QRIS is launched.

License-exempt FCC CCDF providers. Describe the quality information: _____

License-exempt non-CCDF providers. Describe the quality information: _____

Relative child care providers. Describe the quality information: _____

Other. Describe: _____

2.3.7 Lead Agencies are required to post monitoring and inspection reports on the consumer education website for each licensed provider and for each non-relative provider eligible to provide CCDF services on the consumer education website. These reports must include results of required annual monitoring visits and visits due to major substantiated complaints about a provider's failure to comply with health and safety requirements and child care policies. The reports must be in plain language and be timely to ensure that the results of the reports are available and easily understood by parents when they are deciding on a child care provider. Lead Agencies must post at least 3 years of reports when available.

Certify by describing:

- a) How monitoring and inspection reports are in plain language. Include a website link to a sample monitoring report, or if reports are not in plain language, describe how plain-language summaries are used to meet the regulatory requirements. Include a link to a sample report and summary. EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider's licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.
- b) How monitoring and inspection reports and/or their plain-language summaries prominently display any health and safety violations, including any fatalities or serious injuries. EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider's licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.
- c) The process for correcting inaccuracies in reports. EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider's licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.
- d) The process for providers to appeal the findings in the reports, including the time requirements. EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider's licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information..
- e) How reports are posted in a timely manner. Specifically, provide the Lead Agency's definition of "timely" and describe how it ensures that reports are posted within its timeframe. EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider's licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.

- f) How many years of reports that the state/territory posts on its website, if any, beyond the required minimum of 3 years, where available (98.33(a)(4)(iv)). EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider’s licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.
- g) The policy for removing reports after a certain amount of time has passed (e.g., after 7 years). EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider’s licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.
- h) Any additional providers on which the Lead Agency chooses to include reports. Note - Licensed providers and CCDF providers must have monitoring and inspection reports posted on their consumer education website.
- License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- Relative child care providers
- Other. Describe: EEC has not yet developed an electronic means to post monitoring and inspection reports on its consumer education website for its licensed providers or for non-relative providers eligible to provide CCDF services. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date. In the interim, parents and the public who have questions about providers are encouraged to contact the regional offices to receive information about a provider’s licensing history. EEC also accepts and responds to public records requests seeking such information.

2.3.8 Aggregate data on serious injuries, deaths, and substantiated cases of child abuse that have occurred in child care settings each year must be posted on the consumer education website. The information on serious injuries and deaths should be organized by category of care and licensing status, however, Lead Agencies are not required to breakdown the instances of substantiated child abuse by category of care and licensing status.

Certify by providing:

- a) The designated entity to which child care providers must submit reports of any serious injuries or deaths of children occurring in child care (98.16 (ff)) and describe how the Lead Agency obtains the aggregate data from the entity. EEC is the designated entity to which child care providers must report serious injuries or deaths of children occurring in child care. See 606 CMR 7.04(15)(a).

- b) The definition of “substantiated child abuse” used by the Lead Agency for this requirement. “Substantiated child abuse” would be an allegation of abuse or neglect investigated and then supported by DCF pursuant to G.L. c. 119, §51B.
- c) The definition of “serious injury” used by the Lead Agency for this requirement. Any injury to any child which occurs during the hours while such child is in care and which requires hospitalization or emergency medical treatment. See 606 CMR 7.04(15)(a)2.
- d) The website link to the page where the aggregate number of serious injuries, deaths, and substantiated instances of child abuse are posted. EEC has not yet developed a means to post the aggregate number of serious injuries, deaths and substantiated instances of child abuse on its consumer education website. EEC is in the process of developing a new licensing database (LEAD) that EEC expects to incorporate this function at a future date.

2.3.9 The consumer education website should include contact information on referrals to local child care resource and referral organizations. How does the Lead Agency provide referrals to local CCR&R agencies through the consumer education website? Describe and include a website link to this information: EEC provides referrals through the child care search function in which it provides information on the local CCR&R affiliated with a particular licensed child care program as well as a dedicated section to describe how the CCR&Rs can assist families with financial assistance and finding child care that meets their needs: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/child-care-resource-referral-agencies>

2.3.10 The consumer education website should include information on how parents can contact the Lead Agency, or its designee, or other programs that can help the parent understand information included on the website. Describe and include a website link to this information: EEC’s website is designed to be consumer friendly, allowing parents to contact EEC and its regional offices with any questions. There are links to QRIS, resources for families regarding such matters as Early Intervention services, guidance on child development, Early Childhood assessment, as well as financial assistance. At any time, parents or the public who access the website have the ability to immediately contact EEC through a “pop-up” box to let us know what they think.

2.3.11 Provide the website link to the Lead Agency’s consumer education website. <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-early-education-and-care>

2.4 National Website and Hotline

The CCDBG Act of 2014 required the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to establish a national website at ChildCare.gov, which includes a ZIP Code-based search of available child care providers, provider-specific information about the quality of care and health and safety compliance, referrals to local CCR&R organizations, and information about child care subsidy programs and other financial supports available to families (658L(b)). Lead Agencies must also provide a description of how they will respond to complaints submitted through the national website and hotline (98.16(hh)).

2.4.1 Describe how the Lead Agency responds to complaints submitted through the national website and hotline regarding both licensed and license-exempt child care providers. The national

website and hotline will direct individuals to EEC's Regional Licensening Offices. From there, EEC reviews all matters that are reported to determine whether they will be screened in as a complaint. EEC defines substantiated complaint as any regulatory non-compliance that is related to a complaint received by EEC. A response to a complaint may result in an unannounced monitoring visit or an investigation, depending upon the severity of the allegations raised in the complaint. If the unannounced visit or investigation resulted in non-compliances unrelated to the initial complaint allegation, the non-compliances would not be considered a substantiated complaint. Through its statewide computerized tracking system, EEC logs and tracks all complaints, incidents and other information that it receives about licensed CCDF child care providers from a variety of sources, such as parents, concerned individuals, other state agencies and providers themselves. Substantiated parental complaints are not tracked by any separate means.

- 2.4.2 Identify the designee responsible for receiving and responding to complaints submitted through the national website and hotline. EEC's Regional Licensening Offices.

2.5 Additional Consumer and Provider Education

Lead Agencies are required to certify that they will collect and disseminate information about the full diversity of child care services to promote parental choice to parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers. In addition to the consumer education website, the consumer education information can be provided through CCR&R organizations or through direct conversations with eligibility case workers and child care providers. Outreach and counseling can also be effectively provided via information sessions or intake processes for families (658E(c)(2)(E); 98.15(b)(4); 98.33(b)).

In questions 2.5.1 through 2.5.4, certify by describing:

- 2.5.1 How the Lead Agency shares information with eligible parents, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers about the availability of child care services provided through CCDF and other programs for which the family may be eligible, such as state preK, as well as the availability of financial assistance to obtain child care services. At a minimum, describe what is provided (e.g., such methods as written materials, the website, and direct communications) and how information is tailored for these audiences. EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRAs), Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CCRAs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including TANF. In addition to providing all of the information about TANF, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the

entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

- 2.5.2 The partnerships formed to make information about the availability of child care services available to families. EEC partners with the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO), the Massachusetts Head Start Association, the Head Start Statewide Advisory, and Head Start and Early Head Start programs to ensure information, training and resources about other comprehensive services and school readiness across the state are shared with providers. Key partners that support the work of the Collaboration Office include, but are not limited to, the following: DCF, DHCD, DESE, the Massachusetts Community Action Programs Association, the Head Start Association, and the Office of Refugees and Immigrants.
- 2.5.3 How the Lead Agency provides the required information about the following programs and benefits to the parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, providers. In the description, include at a minimum what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners who assist in providing this information.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program: EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including TANF. In addition to providing all of the information about TANF, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs: EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families,

including Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS). In addition to providing all of the information about HS and EHS, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including LIHEAP. In addition to providing all of the information about LIHEAP, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) Program: EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including SNAP. In addition to providing all of the information about SNAP, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department

of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

☒ Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) program: EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CCRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including WIC. In addition to providing all of the information about WIC, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

☒ Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CCRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including CACFP. In addition to providing all of the information about CACFP, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

☒ Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP): EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CCRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families,

including CHIP. In addition to providing all of the information about CHIP, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

☒ Programs carried out under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) : EEC provides providers with information to other available human service programs in a variety of ways, through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Mass 211, and EEC's network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grantees across the Commonwealth. Through the express terms of the contract and through regular meetings, EEC ensures the CRRs, Mass211 and the CFCE grantees have current information related to comprehensive services and EEC priorities. These entities maintain information on local and/or regional comprehensive services available to families, including IDEA. In addition to providing all of the information about IDEA, they may provide information on additional comprehensive supports, such as adult basic education, local and state agencies responsible for subsidized housing, shelter programs, etc. Referrals to families are provided to/from the entities within this network of agencies as well, ensuring that families are connected to the best resources to meet their needs. Partners include all of the entities listed above as well as, Early Intervention, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children and Families. Information may be provided in-person, via telephone, through online resources, or in printed materials.

- 2.5.4 Describe how the Lead Agency makes available to parents, providers, and the general public information on research and best practices concerning children’s development, including physical health and development, particularly healthy eating and physical activity. Information about successful parent and family engagement should also be shared. At a minimum, include what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners in providing this information. Information is shared through direct communication via our state, regional and community-based partners, by addressing a family's specific need on an individual basis, or through general communication across communities, which may include newsletters, email blasts and/or dissemination of online resources. Through the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, EEC, including those developed in partnership with the WGBH Educational Foundation and Boston Children’s Museum, created Resources for Early Learning, a media-rich site of educational resources to help support adults families and educators who teach, nurture, and care for children from birth to age five. These resources were developed by a team of early childhood experts, educators, and parents. WGBH’s Resources for Early Learning contains

activities for parents and early educators to engage in with young children, parenting education videos, WGBH- themed videos and interactive games for young children that focus on language and science concepts, curricula for early educators, and professional development for early educators (For more information visit the Resources for Early Learning website: <http://www.resourcesforearlylearning.org>). Through the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, EEC Resources developed for educators and families, in partnership with the Boston Children's Museum, created resources for educators and families around focus on four core areas, STEM, Brain Building, School Readiness and Literacy, translated in many languages (For more information, please visit:<http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/learning-resources/race-to-the-top>.) Various research and best practice resources are also available on EEC's website, including: Infant Toddler and Preschool Guides: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/parent-and-family-support>/<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-early-learning-guidelines-for-infants-and-toddlers>; Brain Building in Progress website: <http://brainbuildinginprogress.org/the-science>; Choosing Child Care Tips: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/find-early-education-and-care-programs/types-of-early-education-and-care-programs-and-tips-for-parents-on-selecting-a-quality-program/>; Early Learning Standards, including Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten in the Domains of Social and Emotional Learning, and Approaches to Play and Learning (available in multiple languages): <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/curriculum-and-learning/pre-school-and-kindergarten-standards.html>; Guidelines, including the Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers : http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/curriculum/20110519_infant_toddler_early_learning_guidelines.pdf; Child Development Guidance for Parents of Young Children: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/child-development-guidance-for-parents-of-young-children>; Early Intervention Resources for Families: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/resources-for-families-receiving-early-intervention-services-in-early-education>; Early Childhood Assessment Resources: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/early-childhood-assessment>; Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers; Early Childhood Program Standards for 3 and 4 Year Olds; and Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences; PreK Science, Technology and Engineering Standards; and PreK and Kindergarten Standards in Social-Emotional Development and Approaches to Play and Learning: <https://www.mass.gov/eec-learning-standards-and-curriculum-guidelines>. EEC also collaborates with the DSE and the DPH to ensure information, training and resources on social and emotional behavior is provided to the entire mixed-delivery system, which includes those working in family child care homes, center-based programs, and those that are exempt from licensing. In partnership with ESE, the Commonwealth has developed the Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten in the Domains of Social and Emotional Learning, and Approaches to Play and Learning (available in multiple languages): <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/curriculum-and-learning/pre-school-and-kindergarten-standards.html>. Training modules on the standards for both educators and families are in development and will be offered across Massachusetts in Spring 2016. EEC's partners include CCRRs, CFCE grantees, Mass 211, EPS grantees, United Way, Head Start, and contracted

providers, as well as state partners like DCF, DPH, and DTA. EEC continues to integrate the content of the Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten in the Domains of Social and Emotional Learning and Approaches to Plan and Learning, developed in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in professional development opportunities for the field of early childhood. In addition, EEC is working with the Pyramid Model Consortium to design and deliver a statewide initiative to train and provide coaching to staff of no less than 20 early education and care programs on this model. Participants include educators, administrative team leaders, and internally- based coaches. Trained externally-based behavioral health coaches will provide support to internally-based coaches with the implementation of the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices and is widely accepted as best practice in the field of early childhood. This initiative is intended to coordinate with efforts currently underway by the Department of Public Health (DPH) Early Intervention (EI) program and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) related to the implementation of the Pyramid Model in their respective sectors. The overarching goal is to build cross sector, system-wide supports for early education and care programs to support the healthy social, emotional and behavioral health of all children, and to strategically build the capacity of programs through supporting community-wide implementation, while maintaining fidelity of the Pyramid Model approach and reducing external support and coaching. The Pyramid Model Consortium will also be working with an evaluator to evaluate the efficacy of this initiative within early education and care programs to provide data and recommendations to the state for scaling up this work and embedding it into workforce priorities and the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

- 2.5.5 Describe how information on the Lead Agency’s policies regarding the social-emotional and behavioral issues and early childhood mental health of young children, including positive behavioral intervention and support models for those from birth to school age, are shared with families, providers, and the general public. At a minimum, include what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners in providing this information. In Massachusetts, Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) consultation programs provide consultation and coaching services to address and support the social-emotional development and behavioral health of children in early education and care and out-of-school time settings. The early childhood mental health consultation services funded by the Department of Early Education and Care's (EEC) Mental Health Consultation Grant are available state-wide and may be accessed by the entire mixed delivery system, including children receiving CCDF. ECMH consultants also provide support and guidance to programs, educators, and families to address the developmental, emotional, and behavioral challenges of infants and young children to ensure healthy social-emotional development, reduce the suspension and expulsion rate in early education and care settings, and promote school success. EEC established a dedicated webpage for families, providers and the general public to obtain information on ECMH: www.mass.gov/eec/ecmh. This website describes the scope of ECMH services available, as well as a listing of the current ECMH grantees

and resources. The consultation services offered through the FY2018 Mental Health Consultation Grant include mental health supports, strategies, and services that address the developmental, emotional, and behavioral challenges of infants and young children and their families to promote school success, ensure healthy social-emotional development, and reduce the suspension and expulsion rate in early education and care settings. As part of a broader comprehensive statewide system of mental health supports for children and families, EEC is a partner in the MassHealth Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI), to ensure that children with MassHealth coverage, who have significant behavioral, emotional and mental health needs and their families get the services they need for success in home, school, community, and throughout life. In addition to CBHI, EEC participates in a variety of interagency working groups to leverage existing resources to support social and emotional health and to strengthen capacity and build common language across the early childhood field. In collaboration with the Department of Mental Health (DMH), EEC funds a statewide system of early childhood mental health (ECMH) consultation services. EEC has awarded grants to provide early childhood mental health consultation services that meet the needs of the programs, providers, educators, children, families, and communities throughout the Commonwealth. The consultation services offered through the FY2015 Mental Health Consultation Grant include mental health supports, strategies, and services that address the developmental, emotional, and behavioral challenges of infants and young children and their families to promote school success, ensure healthy social-emotional development, and reduce the suspension and expulsion rate in early education and care settings.

- 2.5.6 Describe the Lead Agency's policies to prevent the suspension and expulsion of children from birth to age 5 in child care and other early childhood programs receiving CCDF funds (98.16(ee)), including how those policies are shared with families, providers, and the general public. If a program chooses to suspend or terminate a child for any reason the program must provide written documentation to the parents of the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of the child, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any. Please see 606 CMR 7.04(3)(b) for the licensing regulations pertaining to documentation of suspension or expulsion of children in licensed early education and care settings. In addition, all licensed center-based group and school age child care programs are required to have written policies in place to avoid terminations and expulsions, which must include: (1) providing an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination; (2) offering referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services; (3) pursuing options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training; and (4) developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program. Massachusetts is currently assessing the need to incorporate the same or similar requirements to license-exempt programs serving subsidized children. Please see 606 CMR 7.04(17)(i) for the licensing regulations pertaining to suspensions and expulsions in center-based early education and care settings:
<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/17/606cmr7.pdf><http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/licensing/regulations/2010-reg-family-group-school-age-child-care-programs.pdf>. If a

program chooses to suspend or terminate a child for any reason the program must written documentation to the parents of the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of the child, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any. In addition, all licensed center-based group and school age child care programs are required to have written policies in place to avoid terminations and expulsions, which must include must include: (1) providing an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination; (2) offering referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services; (3) pursuing options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training; and (4) developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program. Massachusetts is currently assessing the need to incorporate the same or similar requirements to license-exempt programs serving subsidized children. Please see 606 CMR 7.04(17)(i) for the licensing regulations pertaining to suspensions and expulsions in center-based early education and care settings:<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/licensing/regulations/2010-reg-family-group-school-age-child-care-programs.pdf>. If a program chooses to suspend or terminate a child for any reason the program must provide written documentation to the parents of the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of the child, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any. Please see 606 CMR 7.04(3)(b) for the licensing regulations pertaining to documentation of suspension or expulsion of children in licensed early education and care settings. In addition, all licensed center-based group and school age child care programs are required to have written policies in place to avoid terminations and expulsions, which must include must include: (1) providing an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination; (2) offering referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services; (3) pursuing options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training; and (4) developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program. Massachusetts is currently assessing the need to incorporate the same or similar requirements to license-exempt programs serving subsidized children. Please see 606 CMR 7.04(17)(i) for the licensing regulations pertaining to suspensions and expulsions in center-based early education and care settings:<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/17/606cmr7.pdf>

2.6 Procedures for Providing Information on Developmental Screenings

Lead Agencies are required to provide information on developmental screenings, including information on resources and services that the State can deploy, such as the use of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act and developmental screening services available under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),, in conducting those developmental screenings and in providing referrals to services for children who receive subsidies. Lead Agencies must also include a description of how a family or child care provider can use these resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for children who receive subsidies and who might be at risk of cognitive or other developmental delays, which can include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays (658E(c)(2)(E)(ii)). Lead Agencies are

required to provide this information to eligible families during CCDF intake and to child care providers through training and education (98.33(c)).

2.6.1 Certify by describing:

- a) How the Lead Agency collects and disseminates information on existing resources and services available for conducting developmental screenings to CCDF parents, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers (98.15(b)(3)). In FY2018, EEC began a new initiative: the Training and Technical Assistance on Developmental Screening Grant program provides evidence-based child developmental screening tools to early education and family child care programs. Successful grantees receive the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ-3™) and Ages & Stages Questionnaires®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ:SE-2™) child development screener, and training on using the ASQ in their programs. The goals of this funding are to: Support grantees with the tools, training, and technical assistance they need to successfully implement screening processes that support healthy development, family engagement, and effective instructional practice; and support grantees in achieving Levels 3 and 4 of MA QRIS. Eligible programs must be EEC-licensed center based or family child care programs or license-exempt/public school based programs in Massachusetts. All applications for licensed programs must have a license in good standing with EEC. The grant is intended for programs that are not currently using developmental screening. Programs may apply if they have a MA QRIS granted Levels 1-3.
- b) The procedures for providing information on and referring families and child care providers to the 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.). Pursuant to EEC child care licensing regulations, all early education and care providers are required to collect and maintain children's records which include: documentation of annual physical examinations, updated immunizations and lead screening; and documentation of the results of vision, hearing and dental screenings. For any families, including children receiving CCDF, that are unable to comply with the child records requirements due to lack of health insurance, the early education and care provider shall make a referral to Mass Health, which is the state Medicaid agency, for purposes of linking the family to the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program. All licensed providers are required to complete progress reports on children participating in the child care program. Progress reports for infants and children with documented special needs must be completed every three months, progress reports for toddlers and pre-school aged children are required every six months, and progress reports for school age children must be completed at least annually at the mid-point of the program year. Notwithstanding the progress report timelines, all licensed providers must document any special problems and significant developments and bring such issues to the parent's attention as soon as they arise. In such instances, the licensee must offer information regarding health and educational resources for the child and family; and obtain parental consent prior to contacting any outside social, educational or health care resource or service provider on behalf of an individual child. In addition to EEC's Licensing Regulations, the Massachusetts Special Education laws articulate the responsibilities of the Local Education Agencies regarding the provision of Preschool Screenings as follows: Each school district shall conduct screening for three and four-year-old and for all children who are of age to enter kindergarten. Such screening shall be designed to review a child's

development and to assist in identification of those children who should be referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. The Massachusetts Quality and Improvement Rating System (QRIS) requires all Level 3 or higher participants, which includes all recipients of the Massachusetts Universal Pre- Kindergarten (UPK) grant, to use screening tools, progress reports, formative assessments and information gathered through observation to set goals for individual children across all developmental domains. Any early education and care provider may make a referral to the state's Department of Public Health's Early Intervention Programs to obtain an evaluation with the child and family to determine eligibility. If such direct contacts are made by the program, the licensee must maintain a written record of such contacts and the results of such contacts. Further, the child care licensing regulations require all licensed group and school age programs to develop and implement written plans for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services (i.e., EPSDT or IDEA), including but not limited to dental check-up, vision or hearing screening for their child, should the program staff feel that an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child. The written plan shall include, but not be limited to the following: 1. staff responsibilities for informing the licensee of their concern; 2. procedures for observing and recording the child's behavior and reviewing the child's record prior to making a referral; 3. procedures for meeting with parents to notify them of the program's concern; 4. a current list of referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list shall include the contact person for St. 1972 c.766 and Early Intervention Program referral; 5. written notice to the appropriate administrator of special education that the licensee is serving a child with a disability, if the child is 2 years and 9 months old or older; and 6. written notice to the administrator of the DPH Early Intervention program if the licensee is serving a child with a disability who is younger than two years and nine months old. Infants and toddlers in EEC licensed programs are expected to be referred to Early Intervention if they are: 1. not reaching age-appropriate milestones in one or more areas; 2. diagnosed with a physical, emotional, or cognitive condition that may result in a developmental delay; or 3. at risk for developmental delay(s) due to various biological and/or environmental factors

- c) How the Lead Agency gives information on developmental screenings to parents receiving a subsidy as part of the intake process. Include the information provided, ways it is provided, and any partners in this work. Subsidy administrators are required to provide the state policies and available information to families on the following topics: Children's social emotional behavioral health, including any positive behavioral health intervention and support models; Policies to prevent suspension and expulsion of children from early education and care programs; developmental screening information, including existing resources and services available to provide screenings, including those available under the federal IDEA and the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program; and how a family or provider may use developmental screening resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for children at risk of cognitive or developmental delays.
- d) How CCDF families or child care providers receiving CCDF can use the available resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for CCDF children at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays. Families or child care providers may utilize the preschool screenings as offered through the school districts to obtain developmental screenings for children who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, which may include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays. In addition to the aforementioned referrals

and screenings, the state's Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees work directly with interested parents and families in community-based settings to offer developmental screenings for young children. CFCE programs offer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) developmental screening tools to parents who consent to have their child screened. Depending on the outcome of the screening, CFCE programs can make referrals to Early Intervention, the special education department in the local school district, or to other appropriate services. In addition to accessing information about ASQ screening locally, parents and families who are interested having their child screened with the ASQ/ASQ-SE are able to be connected to their local CFCE program via the Mass 211 hotline. The 90 CFCE programs across the Commonwealth embed specific information about ASQ in their communications and programming for families to encourage them to access this opportunity to strengthen their knowledge about their child's growth and their capacity to support optimal child development.

- e) How child care providers receive this information through training and professional development. EEC plans to expand the grant program describe in (a) above over the next 2-3 years. The goals for this expansion are supporting effective professional development and implementation of developmental screening across early education program types and increasing overall program quality as measured by the State's QRIS.
- f) Provide the citation for this policy and procedure related to providing information on developmental screenings. 606 CMR 7.04(7)(b) - Children's Records; 606 CMR 7.04(17)(h) - Written Plans for Referral Services; 606 CMR 7.06(5) - Documenting and Reporting Special Problems or Significant Developments; and 603 CMR 28.03(1)(d) - Pre-School Screening Requirements.

2.7 Consumer Statement for Parents Receiving CCDF Funds

Lead Agencies must provide CCDF parents with a consumer statement in hard copy or electronically (such as referral to a consumer education website) that contains specific information about the child care provider they select. This information about the child care provider selected by the parent includes health and safety requirements met by the provider, any licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider, the date the provider was last inspected, any history of violations of these requirements, and any voluntary quality standards met by the provider. It must also describe how CCDF subsidies are designed to promote equal access, how to submit a complaint through a hotline, and how to contact local resource and referral agencies or other community-based supports that assist parents in finding and enrolling in quality child care (98.33(d)). Please note that if the consumer statement is provided electronically, Lead Agencies should consider how to ensure that the statement is accessible to parents and that parents have a way to contact someone to address questions they have.

2.7.1 Certify by describing:

- a) How the Lead Agency provides parents receiving CCDF funds with a consumer statement. EEC is currently awaiting further guidance from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for complying with this requirement.
- b) What is included in the statement, including when the consumer statement is provided to families. EEC is currently awaiting further guidance from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for complying with this requirement.

- c) Provide a link to a sample consumer statement or a description if a link is not available. EEC is currently awaiting further guidance from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for complying with this requirement.

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

In providing child care assistance to families, Lead Agencies are required to implement these policies and procedures: a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination periods, 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 a job search of not fewer than 3 months if the Lead Agency exercises the option to discontinue assistance, and policies for the graduated phase-out of assistance. Also, procedures for the enrollment of homeless children and children in foster care, if served, pending the completion of documentation, are required.

Note: Lead Agencies are not prohibited from establishing policies that extend eligibility beyond 12 months to align program requirements. For example, Lead Agencies can allow children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start, state or local prekindergarten, and other collaborative programs to finish the program year. This type of policy promotes continuity for families receiving services through multiple benefit programs.

In this section, Lead Agencies will identify how they define eligible children and families and how the Lead Agency improves access for vulnerable children and families. This section also addresses the policies that protect working families and determine a family's contribution to the child care payment.

3.1 Eligible Children and Families

At the time when eligibility is determined, children must (1) be younger than age 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 said family); and (3)(a) reside with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program or (b) receives, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in (3)(a.) (658P(4)).

3.1.1 Eligibility criteria based on a child's age

- a) The CCDF program serves children from 0 (weeks/months/years) to 12 years (through age 12). *Note:* Do not include children incapable of self-care or under court supervision, who are reported below in (b) and (c).
- b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children ages 13 and older but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care (658E(c)(3)(B); 658P(3))?

No

Yes, and the upper age is 16 (may not equal or exceed age 19). If yes, provide the Lead Agency definition of physical or mental incapacity: A child who, because of temporary or permanent disabilities arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional, physical, or

environmental factors, or other specific learning disabilities, is or would be unable to progress effectively in a regular school program.

- c) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children ages 13 and older but below age 19 who are under court supervision (658P(3); 658E(c)(3)(B))?

No

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

- d) How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

“residing with”: For purposes of determining eligibility for subsidized child care, a family is defined as one of the following: A parent(s) and his/her dependent child(ren) and any dependent relatives who reside in the same; or a teen parent(s) and his/her children who reside in the same household

“in loco parentis”: This term is not defined by the Lead Agency.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

- a) How does the Lead Agency define “working or attending a job training and educational program” for the purposes of CCDF eligibility at the time of determination? Provide the definitions below for:

“Working”: EEC regulations define working in terms of a "service need" equal to the amount of time child care is required due to the parent's participation in an approved employment related activity. Furthermore, EEC regulations and policy establish the following approved employment related activities, which qualify as "working" for purposes of determining eligibility for subsidized child care: employment, self-employment, including paid in cash; actively deployed military service; or retirement, if applicant is age 65 or older.

“Job training”: EEC regulations define attending job training in terms of a "service need" equal to the amount of time child care is required due to the parent's participation in a training activity. Furthermore, EEC regulations and policy establish the following activities, which qualify as training for purposes of determining eligibility for subsidized child care: vocational training program; or English language training program for people whose primary language is not English (i.e., ESOL). EEC's proposed regulatory changes will define job training as participation in an "approved" training activity.

“Education”: EEC regulations define attending education in terms of a "service need" equal to the amount of time child care is required due to the parent's participation in an educational activity. Furthermore, EEC regulations and policy establish the following activities, which qualify as education for purposes of determining eligibility for subsidized child care: full-time high school program; high school equivalency program; or accredited college/university leading to an associate's or bachelor's degree, not including graduate, medical or law degrees.

“Attending job training or education” (e.g. number of hours, travel time): The service need for parents participating in education or training programs other than college or high school including high school equivalency programs (i.e., GED program), is 2.5 hours of service need for each hour spent in the education or training program per week. The service need for parents participating in a full time high school program will be considered full time,

regardless of the program’s schedule. The service need for parents participating in college coursework with 12 credit hours or more will be considered full time. For parents participating in less than 12 credit hours, the actual credit hours shall be multiplied by 2.5 to establish a child care need. EEC is proposing regulatory changes that parents participating in high school equivalency programs or ESOL programs as their sole service need are limited to one 12 month authorization period.

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)?

No. If no, describe the additional work requirements: _____

Yes. If yes, define the job-search time limit, keeping in mind a minimum of 3 months is required to be provided when a parent experiences a non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity: EEC recognizes participation in education or training programs as qualified service needs. EEC is proposing regulatory changes that allow families who are eligible at the initial determination for CCDF assistance on the basis of an approved education or training participation alone will remain eligible for the entirety of the 12 month authorization period, regardless of whether the parent experiences a cessation of the qualifying activity.

b) Does the Lead Agency consider engaging in a job search or seeking employment an eligible activity at initial eligibility determination (at application) and at the 12-month eligibility redetermination (must provide a minimum of 3 months)?

No.

Yes. If yes, describe the policy or procedure. EEC is proposing regulatory changes that will allow families engaging in a job search or seeking employment as an eligible activity at initial eligibility determination. Parents who do not have an approved activity at time of initial assessment would be granted a period of 12 weeks to seek and certify an approved activity. This would apply to parents on maternity or paternity leave at initial assessment, parents enrolled in a non-approved training program, or parents unable to certify employment at time of the initial eligibility assessment. Parents who were able to provide full documentation of an approved activity before the end of the 12 week period would be issued a 12 month authorization. Parents who were able to provide preliminary proof of an approved activity (i.e. an employment verification form) but were unable to provide full documentation at the end of the 12 week period would be granted an extended period of 8 weeks to provide full documentation required to qualify for a 12 month authorization.

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

No.

Yes. If yes:

- i. Please provide the Lead Agency’s definition of “protective services”: Families authorized for a child care subsidy based on a clinical decision by DCF will be deemed to be in need of protective services, including foster care. Additionally, children may be deemed at risk of needing protective services in special circumstances, wherein families are unable to provide child care for any portion of a 24 hour day due to a situation of domestic violence or homelessness; a

physical, mental, emotional or medical condition; or participation in a drug treatment or drug rehabilitation program.

Note: Federal requirements allow other vulnerable children identified by the Lead Agency not formally in child protection to be included in the Lead Agency’s definition of protective services for CCDF purposes. A Lead Agency may elect to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care when foster care parents are *not* working or are *not* in education/training activities, but this provision should be included in the protective services definition above.

- ii. Are children in foster care considered to be in protective services for the purposes of eligibility at determination?
 No
 Yes
- iii. Does the Lead Agency waive the income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services on a case-by-case basis (658E(c)(5))?
 No
 Yes
- iv. Does the Lead Agency provide respite care to custodial parents of children in protective services?
 No
 Yes

3.1.3 Eligibility criteria based on family income

- a) How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility at the point of determination? When determining financial eligibility, EEC considers relevant income as wages or salary (including overtime), social security benefits, alimony, child support, and public assistance. For earned income, EEC requires applicants to submit 4 out of the most recent 6 weekly pay stubs. If self-employed or an independent contractor, applicants must submit employment verification forms, including report of self-employment earnings, and copies of most recent federal tax returns. For unearned income, copies of award letters (i.e., social security benefits, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, retirement benefits, etc.) or copies of court orders, child support enforcement records or other agreements (i.e., alimony or child support). For in-kind earnings, self -declaration or other informal agreement may be submitted.
- b) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below. Complete columns (a) and (b) based on maximum eligibility at initial entry into CCDF. Complete columns (c) and (d) *only if* the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85 percent of the current state median income (SMI) at the initial eligibility determination point. Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the state (the area serving the highest number of CCDF children).
- c) If the income eligibility limits are not statewide, describe how many jurisdictions set their own income eligibility limits and provide the income limit ranges across the jurisdictions (e.g. range from [lowest limit] to [highest limit])(98.16(i)(3)). n/a

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Family Size	100% of SMI (\$/Month)	85% of SMI (\$/Month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(IF APPLICABLE) (\$/Month) Maximum "Entry" Income Level if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI	(IF APPLICABLE) (% of SMI) [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI
1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	\$6,244	\$5,308	\$3,122	50%
3	\$7,713	\$6,556	\$3,857	50%
4	\$9,183	\$7,805	\$4,591	50%
5	\$10,652	\$9,054	\$5,326	50%

Reminder: Income limits must be established and reported in terms of current SMI based on the most recent data published by the Bureau of the Census (98.20(a)(2)(i)) even if the federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. SMI guidelines are available at : <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im2017-03>.

- d) SMI source and year [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\), 2017](#)
- e) What was the date that these eligibility limits in column (c) became effective? [November 1, 2017](#)
- f) Provide the citation or link, if available, for the income eligibility limits. <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/financial-assistance/financial-assistance-for-families/>

3.1.4 Lead Agencies are required to ensure that children receiving CCDF funds do not have family assets that exceed \$1,000,000, as certified by a family member (98.20(a)(2)(ii)).

- a) Describe how the family member certifies that family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (e.g., a checkoff on the CCDF application). [EEC requires families to complete a Household Income Statement as part of the eligibility process and certify their household does not have assets with a combined value of more than \\$1 million. EEC defines assets as, all houses or other buildings, real property, vehicles, cash, bank accounts, cash value of life insurance policies, trusts, stocks, bonds, equipment, jewelry, or other goods.](#)
- b) Does the Lead Agency waive the asset limit on a case-by-case basis for families defined as receiving, or in need of, protective services?
 - No.
 - Yes. If yes, please identify the policy or procedure: [EEC will waive the asset limit for homeless families, active TAFDC recipients, and for families with active protective services cases with DCF.](#)

3.1.5 Describe any additional eligibility conditions or priority rules applied by the Lead Agency during eligibility determination or redetermination (98.20(b)). [n/a](#)

3.1.6 Lead Agencies are required to take into consideration children’s development and promote continuity of care when authorizing child care services (98.21(f); 98.16(h)(6)). Examples include partnering with Head Start, prekindergarten, or other high-quality programs to create a package of arrangements that accommodates parent’s work schedules; providing more intensive case management for families with children with multiple risk factors; and including in the eligibility determination process a question about whether a child has an Individualized Education Program or Individual Family Service Plan. Describe the Lead Agency’s policies and procedures that take into consideration children’s development and learning and that promote continuity of care when authorizing child care services. All CCRRs and Mass211 have information about Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) that they give to parents, including referring them to the local EHS/HS provider. This can happen both before a parent is offered a subsidy and when referring approved parents to programs in their areas. EEC also has a number of HS programs that have contracts with EEC for the wrap around services. Wrap around can also be written through vouchers. EEC does not tie the hours of care to the parent’s schedule. For instance, once a parent meets the eligibility threshold for part time or full time care, the parent may choose the provider and schedule that best meets their needs. Customized referrals are available for all parents through the CCRRs and Mass211 to help with unique situations or care needed. Children are also ensured continuity of care as long as the parent remains

3.1.7 Graduated phase-out of assistance.

Lead Agencies are required to provide for a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased above the state’s initial income threshold at the time of redetermination but remains below the federal threshold of 85 percent of the state median income. Providing a graduated phase-out promotes continuity by allowing for wage growth, allows for a tapered transition out of the child care subsidy program as income increases, and supports long-term self-sufficiency for families.

Lead Agencies that establish initial family income eligibility below 85 percent of SMI must provide a graduated phase-out by implementing a two-tiered eligibility threshold, with the second tier of eligibility (used at the time of eligibility redetermination) to be set at:

- i. 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size
- ii. An amount lower than 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size but above the Lead Agency’s initial eligibility threshold that:

(A) Takes into account the typical household budget of a low-income family

(B) Provides justification that the second eligibility threshold is:

- (1) Sufficient to accommodate increases in family income over time that are typical for low-income workers and that promote and support family economic stability
- (2) Reasonably allows a family to continue accessing child care services without unnecessary disruption.

At redetermination, a child shall be considered eligible if his or her parents are working or attending a job training or educational program even if their income exceeds the Lead Agency’s

income limit to initially qualify for assistance as long as their income does not exceed the second tier of eligibility (98.21(a); 98.21(b)(1)).

A family eligible for services via the graduated phase-out of assistance is considered eligible under the same conditions as other eligible families with the exception of the copayment restrictions, which do not apply to a graduated phase-out. To help families transition off of child care assistance, Lead Agencies may gradually adjust copay amounts for families whose children are determined eligible under a graduated phase-out and may require additional reporting on changes in family income. However, Lead Agencies must still ensure that any additional reporting requirements do not constitute an undue burden on families.

a) Check and describe the option that best identifies the Lead Agency’s policies and procedures regarding the graduated phase-out of assistance.

N/A—The Lead Agency sets its initial eligibility level at 85 percent of SMI and, therefore, is not required to provide a graduated phase-out period.

The Lead Agency sets the second eligibility threshold at 85 percent of SMI.

Describe the policies and procedures. EEC child care subsidy regulations and policies allow families whose income has increased at the time of reassessment to remain financially eligible provided that the total household income does not exceed 85% of the SMI

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/regs-policies/20130118-revised-financial-assistance-regs.pdf>

The Lead Agency sets the second eligibility threshold at an amount lower than 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size but above the Lead Agency’s initial eligibility threshold.

- Provide the second eligibility level for a family of three.
- Describe how the second eligibility threshold:
 - i. Takes into account the typical household budget of a low-income family:
 - ii. Is sufficient to accommodate increases in family income over time that are typical for low-income workers and that promote and support family economic stability:
 - iii. Reasonably allows a family to continue accessing child care services without unnecessary disruption:
 - iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

b) Does the Lead Agency gradually adjust copays for families eligible under the graduated phase-out period?

No

Yes

- i. If yes, describe how the Lead Agency gradually adjusts copays for families under a graduated phase-out.

If yes, does the Lead Agency require additional reporting requirements during the graduated phase-out period? (Note: Additional reporting requirements are also discussed in section 3.3.3 of the plan.)

No.

Yes. Describe: [REDACTED]

3.1.8 Fluctuation in earnings.

Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate how their processes for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings (658E(c)(2)(N)(i)(II)). The Lead Agency must put in place policies that ensure that temporary increases in income, including temporary increases that can result in a monthly income exceeding 85 percent of SMI (calculated on a monthly basis) from seasonal employment or other temporary work schedules, do not affect eligibility or family copayments (98.21(c)).

Describe the Lead Agency's policy related to the fluctuation in earnings requirement, including how temporary increases that result in a monthly income exceeding 85 percent of SMI (calculated on a monthly basis) do not affect eligibility or family copayments. For families that receive income increases after the most recent eligibility assessment, EEC is proposing changes to its child care subsidy regulations and policies that would only require reporting of changes in income that would put the family above 85% SMI. Under the proposed changes, at each eligibility determination, families would be provided documentation of the current SMI chart alerting them to the amount that is required to be reported to EEC. For applicants with fluctuations in earning (i.e., "irregular earners") such as self-employed, independent contractors, cash-only earners or those with seasonal work schedules, EEC currently and will continue to require submission of annual earnings through tax returns and tax transcripts to determine income eligibility. For individuals that claim irregular earnings resulting from bonuses, over-time, or seasonal earnings. EEC regulations and policies currently allow for the submission of a minimum of 4 of the most recent 6 pay stubs. If the family chooses to submit earnings covering a longer period of time, they may choose to do so to demonstrate "regular" earnings.

3.1.9 Lead Agencies are required to have procedures for documenting and verifying that children receiving CCDF funds meet eligibility criteria at the time of eligibility determination and redetermination (98.68(c)). Check the information that the Lead Agency documents and verifies and describe, at a minimum, what information is required and how often. Check all that apply.

Applicant identity. Describe: EEC requires applicants to submit an original, valid and unexpired photoidentification, such as driver's license, passport or school identification card.

Applicant's relationship to the child. Describe: EEC requires applicants to submit documentation of each dependent child, under 18, or under 24 if child is a full-time student to verify relationship. Documentation includes birth certificates, hospital birth records, court records or other relevant documents, as defined in policy.

Child's information for determining eligibility (e.g., identity, age, citizen/immigration status). Describe: EEC requires applicants to submit documentation of citizenship or immigration status of each child seeking financial assistance, including birth certificates, passports, or report of birth abroad. In addition, applicants must verify relationship and age of child, as discussed above.

- Work. Describe: For employed applicants, EEC requires applicants to submit documentation verifying employment, which may consist of recent pay stubs or completed self-employment packets and tax returns for self-employed or independent contractors.
- Job training or educational program. Describe: For applicants participating in training or educational programs, EEC requires applicants to submit documentation verifying the program's schedule (hours, days/weekand/or credits), including a transcript or written statement from the program.
- Family income. Describe: For earned income, EEC requires applicants to submit 4 out of the most recent 6 weekly pay stubs. If self-employed or an independent contractor, applicants must submit employment verification forms, including a report of self-employment earnings, and copies of most recent federal tax returns. For unearned income, copies of award letters (i.e., social security benefits, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, retirement benefits, etc.) or copies of court orders, child support enforcement records or other agreements (i.e., alimony or child support). For in-kind earnings, a self -declaration or other informal agreement may be submitted.
- Household composition. Describe: EEC requires applicants to report all household members and attest to report veracity, under the pains and penalties of perjury. If subsidy manager has reason to believe applicants have provided incomplete, false, and/or misleading information, additional documentation may be requested to document the residence of non-reported family members, such as copies of any bills, preferably utility bills, dated within 45 days of the eligibility assessment. Concerns of fraud are reported to the Bureau of Special Investigations within the State Auditor's Office.
- Applicant residence. Describe: EEC requires applicants to submit documentation of residency annually or at each reassessment, whichever comes first. Acceptable proofs of residency must show that the applicant's current primary address is located within the Commonwealth. Post Office Box addresses and 911 emergency residence verifications will not be accepted as proof of residency. Examples of acceptable documentation to verify Massachusetts residency include: (a) utility bills issued within the most recent 45 days; (b) property tax bills; (c) individual income tax returns for the most recent year; (d) mortgage documents or homeowner insurance documents; (e) vehicle registration cards; (f) residential rental or lease agreements; or (g) letters from shelter programs confirming residence in a Massachusettsshelter program.
- Other. Describe: For DCF-related child care, applicants must obtain a referral from DCF, which verifies open protective services cases based on supported allegations of abuse or neglect. For TAFDC, applicants must obtain a referral from DTA verifying an open cash claim for TAFDC benefits. For teen parent contracts, in addition to the requirements above, applicants must verify participation in high school or GED program or receipt of high school diploma or GED and participation in any approved work, education or training program.

3.1.10 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

- Track and monitor the eligibility determination process
- Other. Describe
- None

3.1.11 Informing parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the TANF work requirement.

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 younger than age 6 (98.16(v); 98.33(f)).

Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure 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/territory 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: Department of Transitional Assistance (“DTA”)
- b) Provide the following definitions established by the TANF agency:
- “Appropriate child care”: DTA does not have specific definitions for the terms listed in section 3.1.11. However, DTA Field Operations Memo 2005-1A states the following: Each child-care provider, licensed by OCCS [which is the predecessor agency to EEC], is generally considered an inappropriate resource for recipients who need child care. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency staff will assist TANF recipients in making informed decisions regarding the child-care search by assessing each family's needs and reviewing available child-care options, which include the entire mixed delivery system (center-based, family child care, and license exempt options that are willing to enter into a voucher agreement at the state maximum rate for services). The CCRR makes referrals only to appropriate, licensed child-care providers and discusses licensed-exempt options, such as in-home and relative care. If the recipient refuses all referrals made by the CCRR, the recipient shall be deemed to have been offered appropriate and available child care, unless the recipient can provide a reasonable explanation to EEC why the child care should be considered unavailable to or inappropriate for the particular family.
 - “Reasonable distance”: DTA does not have specific definitions for the terms listed in section 3.1.11. However, DTA Field Operations Memo 2005-1A states the following: Each child-care provider, licensed by OCCS [which is the predecessor agency to EEC], is generally considered an inappropriate resource for recipients who need child care. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency staff will assist TANF recipients in making informed decisions regarding the child-care search by assessing each family's needs and reviewing available child-care options, which include the entire

mixed delivery system (center-based, family child care, and license exempt options that are willing to enter into a voucher agreement at the state maximum rate for services). The CCRR makes referrals only to appropriate, licensed child-care providers and discusses licensed-exempt options, such as in-home and relative care. If the recipient refuses all referrals made by the CCRR, the recipient shall be deemed to have been offered appropriate and available child care, unless the recipient can provide a reasonable explanation to EEC why the child care should be considered unavailable to or inappropriate for the particular family.

- “Unsuitability of informal child care”: DTA does not have specific definitions for the terms listed in section 3.1.11. However, DTA Field Operations Memo 2005-1A states the following: Each child-care provider, licensed by OCCS [which is the predecessor agency to EEC], is generally considered an inappropriate resource for recipients who need child care. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency staff will assist TANF recipients in making informed decisions regarding the child-care search by assessing each family's needs and reviewing available child-care options, which include the entire mixed delivery system (center-based, family child care, and license exempt options that are willing to enter into a voucher agreement at the state maximum rate for services). The CCRR makes referrals only to appropriate, licensed child-care providers and discusses licensed-exempt options, such as in-home and relative care. If the recipient refuses all referrals made by the CCRR, the recipient shall be deemed to have been offered appropriate and available child care, unless the recipient can provide a reasonable explanation to EEC why the child care should be considered unavailable to or inappropriate for the particular family.
- “Affordable child care arrangements”: DTA does not have specific definitions for the terms listed in section 3.1.11. However, DTA Field Operations Memo 2005-1A states the following: Each child-care provider, licensed by OCCS [which is the predecessor agency to EEC], is generally considered an inappropriate resource for recipients who need child care. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency staff will assist TANF recipients in making informed decisions regarding the child-care search by assessing each family's needs and reviewing available child-care options, which include the entire mixed delivery system (center-based, family child care, and license exempt options that are willing to enter into a voucher agreement at the state maximum rate for services). The CCRR makes referrals only to appropriate, licensed child-care providers and discusses licensed-exempt options, such as in-home and relative care. If the recipient refuses all referrals made by the CCRR, the recipient shall be deemed to have been offered appropriate and available child care, unless the recipient can provide a reasonable explanation to EEC why the child care should be considered unavailable to or inappropriate for the particular family.

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

In writing

Verbally

Other. Describe:

- d) Provide the citation for the TANF policy or procedure: <https://www.masslegalservices.org/library/directory/dta-policies-materials/dta-operations-memos-online-guide-transmittals/2005-field>

3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

Lead Agencies are required to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, which can include vulnerable populations, in families with very low incomes and to children experiencing homelessness (658E(c)(3)(B); 98.46(a)). The prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., the establishment of a waiting list or the ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served).

Note: CCDF defines “child experiencing homelessness” as a child who is homeless, as defined in Section 725 of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a) (98.2).

3.2.1 Describe how the Lead Agency will prioritize or target child care services for the following children and families.

- a) How does the Lead Agency define “children with special needs” and include a description of how services are prioritized: [Section 1A of Chapter 15D of the Massachusetts General Laws defines child with special needs as a child who, because of temporary or permanent disabilities arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional, physical, or environmental factors, or other specific learning disabilities, is or would be unable to progress effectively in a regular school program. EEC provides funding upon request for assistance to children with special needs, including the funding of one-on-one aides. EEC also allows children with special needs to remain in care up to the age of 16.](#)
- b) How does the Lead Agency define of “families with very low incomes” and include a description of how services are prioritized: [EEC defines families with very low incomes as those families who are at or below 50% of the State Median Income \(SMI\). To ensure child care subsidies are prioritized for families with very low incomes, EEC has implemented a tiered eligibility system that limits entry to the subsidy system for families at or below 50% of the SMI. In addition, EEC prioritizes access to child care financial assistance for specific vulnerable low income populations through its system of statewide contracts, which aim to increase access for children of teen parents and children of families receiving protective services through the DCF. In addition parent fees may be waived for families with open protective services cases from DCF and families with open TAFDC cash benefit cases through DTA.](#)
- c) Describe how services are prioritized for children experiencing homelessness, as defined by the CCDF: [EEC will implement the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness, which will allow EEC to expand the use of qualified shelters to include shelters for parents dealing with substance abuse. Under the proposed regulatory changes, EEC will allow homeless families to use homelessness as a service need in lieu of employment, education, or training. EEC will continue apply all applicable income towards calculation of a parent fee. However, EEC will waive the asset limit for homeless families. EEC will only allow the use homelessness as a service need for two years and any extensions beyond the two years would be evaluated by EEC on a case by case basis.](#)

d) Describe how services are prioritized, if applicable, for families receiving TANF program funds, those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF (98.16(i)(4)): Families referred through DTA who are receiving TAFDC cash assistance or are in their first 12 months of transitional services following the closure of their TAFDC cash benefits claim will have immediate access to childcare subsidies. EEC offers continuity of care for families entering their second 12 months of post-transitional care through the DTA voucher program and offers continuity into its Income Eligible (“IE”) program at the end of the post-transitional period. EEC also waives co-payment requirements for active TAFDC recipients who are referred by DTA, based on the fact that all of these families are at or below the federal poverty level.

3.2.2 Lead Agencies are required to expend CCDF funds to (1) permit the enrollment (after an initial eligibility determination) of children experiencing homelessness while required documentation is obtained, (2) provide training and TA to child care providers and the appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving homeless children and families (addressed in section 6), and (3) conduct specific outreach to homeless families (658E(c)(3); 98.51).

a) Describe the procedures to permit the enrollment of children experiencing homelessness while required documentation is obtained. EEC allows families experiencing homeless to access child care if the parent(s) is unable to submit complete income verification at the time of initial assessment. Families are granted an eight week authorization (twelve weeks under proposed regulations) to submit full income documentation.

b) Describe the procedures to conduct outreach for children experiencing homelessness (as defined by the CCDF) and their families. EEC has contracts for priority access through the Department of Housing and Community Development (who run state funded family shelters) to assist homeless families access child care. DHCD and community partners, including the CRRs and Mass211, ensure that parents are informed of different child care access points.

Note: The Lead Agency shall pay any amount owed to a child care provider for services provided as a result of the initial eligibility determination, and any CCDF payment made prior to the final eligibility determination shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.51(a)(1)(ii)).

3.2.3 Lead Agencies must establish a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care to receive CCDF assistance while providing their families with a reasonable time to take any necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements (as described in section 5). The length of such a grace period shall be established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)(I); 98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)).

Note: Any payment for such a child during the grace period shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(2)).

a) Describe procedures to provide a grace period to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements, including how the length of the grace period was established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency for:

Children experiencing homelessness (as defined by CCDF). EEC child care licensing policy recognizes the fact that homeless children may have difficulty obtaining medical records at the time of admission into a child care program because of the stresses caused by issues

affecting these priority populations. Accordingly, homeless families may be granted up to six (6) months from the date of their child's admission into a child care program to obtain the child's medical records. Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/12/06/Childrens%20Records%20for%20Priority%20Populations.docx>

Children who are in foster care. EEC child care licensing policy recognizes the fact that children involved with DCF, including foster children, may have difficulty obtaining medical records at the time of admission into a child care program because of the stresses caused by issues affecting this priority population. Accordingly, DCF involved families may be granted up to six (6) months from the date of their child's admission into a child care program to obtain the child's medical records. Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/12/06/Childrens%20Records%20for%20Priority%20Populations.docx>

- b) Describe how the Lead Agency coordinates with licensing agencies and other relevant state, territorial, tribal, and local agencies to provide referrals and support to help families with children receiving services during a grace period comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(4)). EEC contains the agency responsible for licensing. As described above, priority populations may be granted up to six (6) months from the date of their child's admission into a child care program to obtain the child's medical records.

Does the Lead Agency establish grace periods for other children who are not experiencing homelessness or in foster care?

No.

Yes. Describe: EEC allows children from a teen parent and children of families receiving protective services through the DCF up to six (6) months from the date of their child's admission into a child care program to obtain the child's medical records.

3.3 Protection for Working Families

3.3.1 12-Month eligibility.

The Lead Agency is required to establish a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination period, regardless of changes in income (as long as the income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85 percent of the state median income) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or educational activities (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) and (ii)).

This change means that a Lead Agency 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 percent of SMI. The Lead Agency may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the 12-month period if a family experiences a temporary job loss or a temporary change in participation in a training or educational activity. A temporary change in eligible activity includes, at a minimum, any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to such reasons as the need to care for a family member or an illness; any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working; any student holiday or break for

a parent participating in a training or educational program; any reduction in work, training, or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending a training or educational program; any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or educational program that does not exceed 3 months or a longer period of time established by the Lead Agency; any changes in age, including turning 13 years old during the 12-month eligibility period; and any changes in residency within the state, territory, or tribal service area.

- a) Describe the Lead Agency's policies and procedures in implementing the minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination requirements, including when a family experiences a temporary change in activity. EEC is proposing regulatory changes that will that will allow for authorization periods not to exceed 12 months. EEC has collaborated with DCF and DTA, who were each previously authorized to issue shorter authorization periods, to ensure each agency issues authorization periods for no less than 12 month intervals. EEC is proposing that families that experience a temporary change in circumstances during the 12 month authorization period would remain eligible and would not be required to report to EEC. Families would only be required to report a non-temporary change to a parent's circumstances, which would include: increases in total household income exceeding 85% SMI; changes in household composition for more than 30 total days in a 12 month authorization; changes in child custody arrangements; any out of state change in address; or any cessation of a parent's work, training, or education participation for more than 30 days. A family could be terminated within the 12 month authorization period if the family engages in substantiated fraud. EEC is proposing to define substantiated fraud as providing false or misleading information or documentation to EEC, a subsidy administrator or an EEC contractor at any time for the purpose of establishing or maintaining eligibility or increasing the level of child care assistance that has been verified as false or misleading by EEC, a subsidy administrator, or a contractor. EEC is proposing to define an IPV as a parent's failure to adhere to its subsidy requirements, including: failing to report a non-temporary change, with the exception of a cessation in a parent's work, training, or education participation, within 30 days from the date the change occurred; failure to maintain service need for 35 weeks; and non-payment of fees, including fees associated with excessive absences.
- b) How does the Lead Agency define "temporary change?" EEC is proposing to define a temporary change as a change that would not be covered under its definition of non-temporary change. EEC intends to define non-temporary change as a change to a parent's circumstances, including: increases in total household income exceeding 85% SMI; changes in household composition for more than 30 total days in a 12 month authorization; changes in child custody arrangements; any out of state change in address; or any cessation of a parent's work, training, or education participation for more than 30 days.
- c) Provide the citation for this policy and/or procedure. Massachusetts Subsidized Child Care Regulations at 606 CMR 10.00

3.3.2 Option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period.

Lead Agencies have the option, but are not required, to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's *non-temporary* loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program, otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity (i.e., if the parent experiences a temporary change in his or her status as working or participating in a training or educational program, as described in section 3.3.1 of the plan).

If the Lead Agency chooses the option to discontinue assistance due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity, it must continue assistance at least at the same level for a period of not fewer than 3 months after each such loss or cessation for the parent to engage in a job search and to resume work or resume attendance in a job training or educational program. At the end of the minimum 3-month period of continued assistance, if the parent has engaged in a qualifying work, training, or educational program activity with an income below 85 percent of SMI, assistance cannot be terminated, and the child must continue receiving assistance until the next scheduled redetermination or, at the Lead Agency option, for an additional minimum 12-month eligibility period.

- a) Does the Lead Agency choose to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity and offer a minimum 3-month period to allow parents to engage in a job search and to resume participation in an eligible activity?

No, the state/territory does not allow this option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's *non-temporary* loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program.

Yes, the Lead Agency discontinues assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of eligible activity and provides a minimum 3-month period of job search. If yes:

- ii. Provide a summary describing the Lead Agency's policies and procedures for discontinuing assistance due to a parent's non-temporary change: [REDACTED]
- iii. Describe what specific actions/changes trigger the job-search period. [REDACTED]
- iv. How long is the job-search period (must be at least 3 months)? [REDACTED]
- v. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure. [REDACTED]

- b) The Lead Agency may discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination in the following limited circumstances. Check and describe any circumstances in which the Lead Agency chooses to discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination. Check all that apply.

Not applicable.

Excessive unexplained absences despite multiple attempts by the Lead Agency or designated entity to contact the family and provider, including the prior notification of a possible discontinuation of assistance.

- i. Define the number of unexplained absences identified as excessive: EEC considers excessive unexplained absences as a failure to attend a subsidized child care program for more than three consecutive days without contacting the provider. The provider will be expected to call the family on day 3. The first occurrence of excessive absences would result in a warning to the parent. After the second occurrence of excessive absences, EEC would no longer pay for the child's absences and the provider would have the option to terminate.
- ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure: EEC Subsidy Regulations 606 CMR 10.10(1)

A change in residency outside of the state, territory, or tribal service area. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure: EEC is in the process of revising its financial assistance regulations

Substantiated fraud or intentional program violations that invalidate prior determinations of eligibility. Describe the violations that lead to discontinued assistance and provide the citation for this policy or procedure. EEC is in the process of revising its financial assistance regulations

3.3.3 Change reporting during the 12-month eligibility period.

The Lead Agency must describe the requirements for parents to report changes in circumstances during the 12-month eligibility period and describe efforts to ensure that such requirements do not place an undue burden on eligible families, which could impact the continuity of care for children and stability for families receiving CCDF services (98.16(h)(1)).

Note: Responses should exclude reporting requirements for a graduated phase-out, which were described in question 3.1.7(b).

Families are required to report a change to the Lead Agency at any time during the 12-month eligibility period if the family's income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income, taking into account irregular fluctuations in income (98.21(e)(1)). If the Lead Agency chooses the option to terminate assistance, as described in section 3.3.2 of the plan, they may require families to report a non-temporary change (as described in section 3.3.3 of the plan) in work, training or educational activities (otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity).

a) Does the Lead Agency require families to report a non-temporary change in a parent's eligible activity?

No

Yes

b) Any additional reporting requirements during the 12-month eligibility period must be limited to items that impact a family's eligibility (e.g., income changes over 85 percent of SMI or that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family or pay the child care providers (e.g., a family's change of address, a change in the parent's choice of child care provider).

Check and describe any additional reporting requirements required by the Lead Agency during the 12-month eligibility period. Check all that apply.

Additional changes that may impact a family's eligibility during the 12-month period.

Describe: Under proposed regulatory changes, EEC will require a family to report any changes in household composition during the 12 month authorization period. Household composition will be defined in regulations as anyone who resides in the home for thirty days or more. EEC will not change the 12 month authorization when parents report a change in household composition, unless it results in a reduced parent fee, but instead, parents will be reassessed at next reassessment period. The CCRR will consult with the parent and advise the parent about the possible impact at the next reassessment period. However, If parent fails to report then it will result in an IPV. EEC will also require families to report any change

in child custody arrangements. EEC will change who the subsidy is under but not change the level of care for the child. EEC will reduce parent fee, if applicable

Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family. Describe:

Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to pay child care providers. Describe:

Any additional reporting requirements that the Lead Agency chooses, as its option to require from parents during the 12-month eligibility period, shall not require an office visit. In addition, the Lead Agency must offer a range of notification options to accommodate families.

- c) How does the Lead Agency allow for families to report changes to ensure that reporting requirements are not burdensome and to avoid an impact on continued eligibility between redeterminations? Check all that apply.

Phone

Email

Online forms

Extended submission hours

Other. Describe: EEC allows families to fax or hand deliver documentation and updates.

- d) Families must have the option to voluntarily report changes on an ongoing basis during the 12-month eligibility period.

Lead Agencies are required to act on information reported by the family if it will reduce the family's co-payment or increase the family's subsidy. Lead Agencies are prohibited from acting on information reported by the family that would reduce the family's subsidy unless the information reported indicates that the family's income exceeds 85 percent of SMI after considering irregular fluctuations in income or, at the option of the Lead Agency, the family has experienced a non-temporary change in eligible activity.

- i. Describe any other changes that the Lead Agency allows families to report. Under proposed regulatory changes, EEC will allow families to report any changes during the 12 month authorization period that would benefit the family, including, but not limited to, a reduction in income that may lead to a reduced parent fee; or an increase in qualifying activity that may increase the family from part-time to full-time care.
- ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure. EEC is in the process of revising its financial assistance regulations

3.3.4 Prevent the disruption of employment, education, or job training activities.

Lead Agencies are required to have procedures and policies in place to ensure that parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under the TANF program) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment, education, or job training activities to comply with the Lead Agency's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility for assistance (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii); 98.21(d)).

Examples include developing strategies to inform families and their providers of an upcoming redetermination and that information required of the family, pre-populating subsidy renewal

forms, having parents confirm that the information is accurate, and/or asking only for the information necessary to make an eligibility redetermination. In addition, states and territories can offer a variety of family-friendly methods for submitting documentation for eligibility redetermination.

- a) Describe the Lead Agency’s procedures and policies to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving TANF program funds) do not have their employment, education, or job training unduly disrupted to comply with the state/territory’s or designated local entity’s requirements for the redetermination of eligibility. List relevant policy citations.
- Documentation of a family’s income, service need, family size, and residence must be updated for each reassessment. Reassessment should occur by phone, mail, e-mail, or fax, if possible, to facilitate access for families. This requirement is also expressly included in the terms of the CCRR contract, as a method for reducing the burden on families receiving subsidy through the voucher system. For families funded through the contract system, eligibility assessments are completed, generally, by the early education and care program (or umbrella agency) who is providing the direct services to the children in the household, which is intended to reduce the burden on families.
- b) How are families allowed to submit documentation for redetermination? Check all that apply.
- Mail
 - Email
 - Online forms
 - Fax
 - In-person
 - Extended submission hours
 - Other. Describe:

3.4 Family Contribution to Payments

Lead Agencies are required to establish and periodically revise a sliding-fee scale for CCDF families that varies based on income and the size of the family to determine each family’s contribution (i.e., co-payment) that is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(5)). In addition to income and the size of the family, the Lead Agency may use other factors when determining family contributions/co-payments. Lead Agencies, however, may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

Note: To help families transition off of child care assistance, Lead Agencies may gradually adjust co-pay amounts for families determined to be eligible under a graduated phase-out. However, section 3.4 applies *only* to families in their initial/entry eligibility period. See section 3.1.4 Graduated Phase-Out regarding co-pays during the graduated phase-out period.

- 3.4.1 Provide the CCDF co-payments in the chart below according to family size for one child in care.

- a) Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the State (area serving highest number of CCDF children).

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Family Size	Lowest "Entry" Income Level Where Family Is First Charged Co-Pay (Greater Than \$0)	What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (a)?	The Co-Payment in Column (b) is What Percentage of the Income in Column (a)?	Highest "Entry" Income Level Before a Family Is No Longer Eligible	What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (d)?	The Co-Payment in Column (e) is What Percentage of the Income in Column (d)?
1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2	\$972	\$43.30	4.4%	\$5651	\$887.65	15%
3	\$1181	\$43.30	3.6%	\$6925	\$887.65	13%
4	\$1422	\$43.30	3.0%	\$8251	\$887.65	11%
5	\$1664	\$43.30	2.6%	\$9551	\$887.65	9%

- b) What is the effective date of the sliding-fee scale(s)? October 1, 2014
- c) Provide the link to the sliding-fee scale: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/financial-assistance/financial-assistance-for-families/>
- d) If the sliding-fee scale is not statewide, describe how many jurisdictions set their own sliding-fee scale (98.16(i)(3)). n/a

3.4.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated, and to whom will it be applied? Check all that apply.

The fee is a dollar amount and:

- The fee is per child, with the same fee for each child.
- The fee is per child and is discounted for two or more children.
- The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
- No additional fee is charged after certain number of children.
- The fee is per family.
- The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

Describe:

Other. Describe:

The fee is a percent of income and:

- The fee is per child, with the same percentage applied for each child.
- The fee is per child, and a discounted percentage is applied for two or more children.
- The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.

- No additional percentage is charged after certain number of children.
- The fee is per family.
- The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1). Describe:
- Other. Describe:

3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's co-payment (658E(c)(3)(B))? Reminder – Lead Agencies may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

- No.
- Yes, check and describe those additional factors below.
 - Number of hours the child is in care. Describe:
 - Lower co-payments for a higher quality of care, as defined by the state/territory. Describe:
 - Other. Describe:

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 (98.45(k)) or for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined for purposes of CCDF eligibility, or who meet other criteria established by the Lead Agency (98.45(k)(4)). Does the Lead Agency waive family contributions/co-payments for any of the following? Check all that apply.

- No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments.
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families with an 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 \$.
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined by the Lead Agency for purposes of CCDF eligibility. Describe the policy and provide the policy citation. .
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for other criteria established by the Lead Agency. Describe the policy and provide the policy citation. .

3.4.5 Does the Lead Agency allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment in instances where the provider's price exceeds the subsidy payment (98.45(b)(5))?

- No.
- Yes. If yes:
 - a) Provide the rationale for the Lead Agency's policy to allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment, including a demonstration of how the policy promotes affordability and access for families?
 - b) Provide data (including data on the size and frequency of such amounts) on the extent to which CCDF providers charge additional amounts to families.

- c) Describe the Lead Agency’s analysis of the interaction between the additional amounts charged to families with the required family co-payment, and the ability of current subsidy payment rates to provide access to care without additional fees. [REDACTED]

3.4.6 How will the Lead Agency ensure that the family contribution/co-payment, based on a sliding-fee scale, is affordable and is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds? Check all that apply.

- Limit the maximum co-payment per family. Describe: [REDACTED]
- Limit the combined amount of co-payment for all children to a percentage of family income. List the percentage of the co-payment limit and describe. [REDACTED]
- Minimize 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: [REDACTED]
- Other. Describe: [REDACTED]

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

A core purpose of CCDF is to promote parental choice and to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suit their family’s needs. Parents have the option to choose from center-based care, family child care or care provided in the child’s own home. In supporting parental choice, the Lead Agencies must ensure that families receiving CCDF funding have the opportunity to choose from the full range of eligible child care settings and must provide families with equal access to child care that is comparable to that of non-CCDF families. Lead Agencies must employ strategies to increase the supply and to improve the quality of child care services, especially in underserved areas. This section addresses strategies that the Lead Agency uses to promote parental choice, ensure equal access, and increase the supply of child care.

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 receiving a child care certificate or, if available, enrolling his or her child with a provider that has a grant or contract for providing child care services (658E(c)(2)(A); 98.30(a)). Even if a parent chooses to enroll his or her child with a provider who has a grant or contract, the parent will select the provider, to the extent practicable. If a parent chooses to use a certificate, the Lead Agency shall provide information to the parent on the range of provider options, including care by sectarian providers and relatives. Lead Agencies must require providers chosen by families to meet health and safety standards and has the option to require higher standards of quality. Lead agencies are reminded that any policies and procedures should not restrict parental access to any type of care or provider (e.g. center care, home care, in-home care, for-profit provider, non-profit provider or faith-based provider, etc.) (98.15 (a)(5)).

- 4.1.1 Describe the child care certificate, including when it is issued to parents (before or after the parent has selected a provider) and what information is included on the certificate (98.16 (q)). Parents are offered a certificate (called voucher) off of the statewide waitlist when funding is

available. Funding availability letter includes what documentation is needed to prove eligibility. Parent is expected to identify a provider prior to the issuance of a voucher but assistance in finding a provider is given by the CCRR when needed. Once issued, voucher details parent information, provider information, placement details (including child schedule), and parent co-payment information.

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

- Certificate that provides information about the choice of providers
- Certificate that provides information about the quality of providers
- Certificate not linked to a specific provider, so parents can choose any provider
- 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 the application
- Community outreach, workshops, or other in-person activities
- Other. Describe: _____

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 to be paid in the certificate program.

No. If no, skip to 4.1.4.

Yes. If yes, describe:

- i. How the Lead Agency ensures that parents who enroll with a provider who has a grant or contract have choices when selecting a provider: If a parent is offered a subsidy through a contract, the parent may refuse the slot without losing the household's place on the waitlist. Also, the parent choice regulations and policies of EEC's child care subsidy program allow a parent enrolled in a contract slot to transfer his/her child to another program provided that the parent gives the existing provider at least two weeks' notice of the change. It is the responsibility of the subsidy administrators -- the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies or Contract Providers -- to advise a parent of his/her right to change providers. _____
- ii. The type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts: EEC administers multiple contracts to serve low-income families (Income Eligible Child Care), children with active protective services cases (Supportive or DCF Related Child Care), Teen Parents, and Homeless Families. All contracts allow for care for all age groups.

- iii. The entities that receive contracts (e.g., shared services alliances, CCR&R agencies, FCC networks, community-based agencies, child care providers): EEC contracts with center-based child care programs, including school age programs, and with family child care systems for family child care services at affiliated licensed family child care homes.
- iv. The process for accessing grants or contracts: Contracts for direct child care services are awarded through a competitive procurement process. The next competitive procurement will occur in early 2019.
- v. How rates for contracted slots are set through grants and contracts: The base rates for child care subsidies (for both vouchers and contracts) are set based on geographic region taking into account the age of children (i.e., infant, toddler, pre-school, and school age) and child care settings (i.e., center-based versus family child care). In addition to the base rate, Family Child Care Systems are provided an additional administrative fee to provide supports to affiliated family child care providers. Family Child Care Systems must reimburse the affiliated family child care providers the base child care rate, but may pay providers a higher rate. Through EEC's Priority Population contracts for supportive child care, teen parent child care, and homeless child care, contracted providers receive an additional \$17.22 per day for support services. "Support services" include required case management/social services as well as transportation costs, if needed.
- vi. How the Lead Agency determines which entities to contract with for increasing supply and/or improving quality: Contracts for direct child care services are awarded through a competitive procurement process. The development of the procurement includes decisions on the allocations of slots by geographic region and age group to ensure supply statewide. In addition, programs holding contracts are required to participate in the Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- vii. If contracts are offered statewide and/or locally: Contract slots are offered statewide and are allocated by geographic region.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to increase the supply and/or quality of specific types of care? Check all that apply.

- 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

4.1.4 Certify by describing the Lead Agency's procedures for ensuring that parents have unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(B); 98.16(t)). EEC licensing regulations require that all licensed child care programs provide parents with access to their children whenever children are in care. Specifically, licensed programs must permit and encourage unannounced visits by parents to the program and to their child's room while their child is present. To ensure that parents are aware of this requirement, EEC requires that providers have a written policy regarding parents' unlimited access to their children and that providers communicate this policy to parents at enrollment through the parent handbook

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 (98.16(i)(2)). Will the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

No.

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 the number of children in the care of the provider to meet the Fair Labor Standards Act (minimum wage) requirements. Describe: _____

Restricted based on the provider meeting a minimum age requirement. (A relative provider must be at least 18 years of age based on the definition of eligible child care provider (98.2). Describe: In-home care providers must be at least 18 years of age.

Restricted based on the hours of care (i.e., certain number of hours, non-traditional work hours). Describe: In-home care providers may not be reimbursed for more than 50 hours of child care services per week.

Restricted to care by relatives. Describe: _____

Restricted to care for children with special needs or a medical condition. Describe: _____

Restricted to in-home providers that meet additional health and safety requirements beyond those required by CCDF. Describe: _____

Other. Describe: The total number of the children under the age of 13 present when care is being given cannot exceed six. In-home care cannot be used if child receiving care has been identified as having a special need or while a parent is using a service need of maternity leave. Caregiver cannot be the child's parent, stepparent, foster parent, or guardian.

4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs

Lead Agencies have the option to conduct a statistically valid and reliable (1) market rate survey (MRS) reflecting variations in the price to parents of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child and/or (2) an alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model (658E(c)(4)(B)). A cost estimation model estimates the cost of care by incorporating both data and assumptions to model what expected costs would be incurred by child care providers

and parents under different cost scenarios. Another approach would be a cost study that collects cost data at the facility or program level to measure the costs (or inputs used) to deliver child care services. The MRS or alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than 2 years before the date of submission of the Plan.

Note – Any Lead Agency considering using an alternative methodology, instead of a market rate survey, is required to submit a description of its proposed approach to its ACF Regional Child Care Program Office for pre-approval in advance of the Plan submittal (see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/ccdf-acf-pi-2016-08>). Advance approval is not required if the Lead Agency plans to implement both a market rate survey and an alternative methodology. In its request for ACF pre-approval, a Lead Agency must:

- Provide an overview of the Lead Agency’s proposed approach (e.g., cost estimation model, cost study/survey, etc.), including a description of data sources.
- Describe how the Lead Agency will consult with the State's Early Childhood Advisory Council or similar coordinating body, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, organizations representing child care caregivers, teachers and directors, and other appropriate entities prior to conducting the identified alternative methodology.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will use methods that are statistically valid and reliable and will yield accurate results. For example, if using a survey, describe how the Lead Agency will ensure a representative sample and promote an adequate response rate. If using a cost estimation model, describe how the Lead Agency will validate the assumptions in the model.
- If the proposed alternative methodology includes an analysis of costs (e.g., cost estimation model or cost study/survey), describe how the alternative methodology will account for key factors that impact the cost of providing care—such as: staff salaries and benefits, training and professional development, curricula and supplies, group size and ratios, enrollment levels, licensing requirements, quality level, facility size, and other factors.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will provide complete information that captures the universe of providers in the child care market.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will reflect variations by provider type, age of children, geographic location and quality.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will use current, up-to-date data.
- Describe the estimated reporting burden and cost to conduct the approach.

4.2.1 Please identify the methodology(ies) used below to assess child care prices and costs.

MRS

Alternative methodology. Describe:

Both. Describe:

4.2.2 Prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency is required to consult with the (1) State Advisory Council 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 and (2) organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology.

Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the:

- a) State Advisory Council or other state-designated cross-agency body: As part of this year's MRS, EEC and its consultant formed a special MRS Advisory Council made up of representatives of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Center Based providers, Family Child Care Systems, Family Child Care providers, Head Start providers, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509. This Advisory Council was very involved in the development of the survey questions and outreach plan. In addition, these stakeholders intent to help improve provider response rates by ensuring that providers are aware of the survey and respond in a timely manner.
- b) Local child care program administrators: As part of this year's MRS, EEC and its consultant formed a special MRS Advisory Council made up of representatives of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Center Based providers, Family Child Care Systems, Family Child Care providers, Head Start providers, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509. This Advisory Council was very involved in the development of the survey questions and outreach plan. In addition, these stakeholders intent to help improve provider response rates by ensuring that providers are aware of the survey and respond in a timely manner.
- c) Local child care resource and referral agencies: As part of this year's MRS, EEC and its consultant formed a special MRS Advisory Council made up of representatives of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Center Based providers, Family Child Care Systems, Family Child Care providers, Head Start providers, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509. This Advisory Council was very involved in the development of the survey questions and outreach plan. In addition, these stakeholders intent to help improve provider response rates by ensuring that providers are aware of the survey and respond in a timely manner.
- d) Organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors: As part of this year's MRS, EEC and its consultant formed a special MRS Advisory Council made up of representatives of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Center Based providers, Family Child Care Systems, Family Child Care providers, Head Start providers, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509. This Advisory Council was very involved in the development of the survey questions and outreach plan. In addition, these stakeholders intent to help improve provider response rates by ensuring that providers are aware of the survey and respond in a timely manner.
- e) Other. Describe: As part of this year's MRS, EEC and its consultant formed a special MRS Advisory Council made up of representatives of the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Center Based providers, Family Child Care Systems, Family Child Care providers, Head Start providers, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509. This Advisory Council was very involved in the development of the survey questions and outreach plan. In addition, these stakeholders intent to help improve provider response rates by ensuring that providers are aware of the survey and respond in a timely manner.

4.2.3 Describe how the market rate survey is statistically valid and reliable. To be considered valid and reliable, the MRS must represent the child care market, provide complete and current data, use rigorous data collection procedures, reflect geographic variations, 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 methods. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.

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

- a) Geographic area (e.g., statewide or local markets). Describe: EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.
- b) Type of provider. Describe: EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.
- c) Age of child. Describe: EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.
- d) Describe any other key variations examined by the market rate survey or alternative methodology, such as quality level. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.

4.2.5 After conducting the market rate survey or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or alternative methodology. The detailed report must also include the estimated cost of care (including any relevant variation by geographic location, category of provider, or age of child) necessary to support (1) child care providers' implementation of the health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements and (2) higher quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality indicators, at each level of quality. The Lead Agency must make the report with these results widely available no later than 30 days after completion of the report, including posting the results on the Lead Agency website. The Lead Agency must describe in the detailed report how the Lead Agency took into consideration the views and comments of the public.

Describe how the Lead Agency made the results of the market rate survey or alternative methodology report widely available to the public (98.45(f)(1)). EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.

- a) Date of completion of the market rate survey or alternative methodology (must be no earlier than July 1, 2016, and no later than July 1, 2018). EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.
- b) Date the report containing results was made widely available—no later than 30 days after the completion of the report. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.
- c) Describe how the Lead Agency made the detailed report containing results widely available and provide the link where the report is posted. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.

- d) Describe how the Lead Agency considered stakeholder views and comments in the detailed report. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey, which is expected to be completed in June 2018.

4.3 Setting Payment Rates

The Lead Agency must set CCDF subsidy payment rates, in accordance with the results of the current MRS or alternative methodology, at a level to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services that are comparable with those provided to families not receiving CCDF funds. The Lead Agency must re-evaluate its payment rates *at least* every 3 years.

- 4.3.1 Provide the base payment rates and percentiles (based on the most recent MRS) for the following categories below. If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS (only or in combination with an alternative methodology), also report the percentiles based on the most recent MRS. The ages and types of care listed below are meant to provide a snapshot of the categories on which rates can be based and are not intended to be comprehensive of all categories that might exist or to reflect the terms used by the Lead Agency for particular ages. Please use the most populous geographic region (area serving highest number of CCDF children).

- a) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$65 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 84
- b) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed FCC home in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$44.07 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 59.6
- c) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$59.47 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 84.6
- d) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$44.07 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 59
- e) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$42.18 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 63.2
- f) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
Rate \$35.07 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)
Percentile of most recent MRS: 53
- g) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region
Rate \$37.56 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 53.7

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

Rate \$35.07 per daily unit of time (e.g., hourly, daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 53

- i) Describe how part-time and full-time care were defined and calculated. "Full-time care" is defined as services for not less than 30 hours nor more than 50 hours per week at any one placement.
- j) Provide the effective date of the current payment rates (i.e., date of last update based on most recent MRS). July 1, 2017
- k) Provide the citation or link, if available, to the payment rates. www.mass.gov/service-details/daily-reimbursement-rate-for-early-education-and-care-programs
- l) If the payment rates are not set by the Lead Agency for the entire state/territory, describe how many jurisdictions set their own payment rates (98.16(i)(3)). n/a

- 4.3.2 Lead Agencies can choose to establish tiered rates, differential rates, or add-ons on top of their base rates as a way to increase payment rates for targeted needs (i.e., a 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 and describe the types of tiered reimbursement or differential rates, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement. In the description of any tiered rates or add-ons, at a minimum, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates, including if the rates were based on the MRS and/or an alternative methodology, and the amount of the rate. Check all that apply.

Differential rate for *non-traditional hours*. Describe: _____

Differential rate for *children with special needs*, as defined by the state/territory. Describe: EEC provides funding for one on one aides for children with special needs as requested by providers.

Differential rate for *infants and toddlers*. Describe: EEC has implemented a 3% rate increase for any programs serving infants and toddlers through the child care subsidy program that have achieved a Level 2 or above rating in QRIS.

Differential rate for *school-age programs*. Describe: _____

Differential rate for *higher quality*, as defined by the state/territory. Describe: EEC has implemented a 3% rate increase for any programs serving infants and toddlers through the child care subsidy program that have achieved a Level 2 or above rating in QRIS._____

Other differential rates or tiered rates. Describe: Through its Priority Populations contracts, programs awarded contracts to serve children in protective services, children of teen parents, and homeless children receive an additional \$17.22 per day.

Tiered or differential rates are not implemented.

4.4 Summary of Facts Used To Determine That Payment Rates Are Sufficient To Ensure Equal Access

4.4.1 Lead Agencies must certify that CCDF payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services comparable to those provided by families not receiving CCDF assistance (98.16(a)). Certify that payment rates reported in 4.3.1 are sufficient to ensure equal access by providing the following summary of facts (98.45(b)):

- a) Describe how a choice of the full range of providers pursuant to 98.30(e)(1) is made available; the extent to which child care providers participate in the CCDF system; and any barriers to participation, including barriers related to payment rates and practices. Although the current rates in some geographic regions and age groups are below the 75th percentile, a review of historical data from EEC's subsidy management applications demonstrate that children have access to the entire mixed delivery system (i.e., center-based, family child care, license exempt programs and informal child care options) and that more than 50% of the licensed early education and care programs throughout the Commonwealth hold voucher agreements and/or contracts to serve children eligible to receive CCDF funded child care subsidizes.
- b) Describe how payment rates are adequate and have been established based on the most recent MRS or alternative methodology. EEC has not traditionally used the Market Rate Survey to set payments rates but rather as a piece of information to inform rate discussions. However, in State Fiscal Year 2015 EEC used the last Market Rate Survey as the basis for bringing all Infant and Toddler rates that were below the 50th percentile up to that level.
- c) Describe how base payment rates enable providers to meet health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements under CCDF. EEC is reviewing the cost of care as a part of the current Market Rate Survey. EEC will ensure through the Market Rate Survey that providers are paid rates sufficient to ensure they are able to meet the health, safety, quality, and staff requirements under CCDF.
- d) Describe how the Lead Agency took the cost of higher quality into account, including how payment rates for higher-quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a QRIS or other system of quality indicators, relate to the estimated cost of care at each level of quality. EEC offers a 3% rate increase for any programs serving infants and toddlers through the child care subsidy program that have achieved a Level 2 or above rating in QRIS.
- e) How co-payments based on a sliding fee scale reported in 3.4.1 are affordable (response provided in 3.4.6)
- f) Describe how Lead Agencies' payment practices described in 4.5 support equal access to a range of providers. EEC's payment practices described in section 4.5 ensure payment is promptly made, covers longer period of times and regular absences, and has prompt resolution of conflicts.
- g) Describe how and on what factors the Lead Agency differentiates payment rates. Check all that apply.
 - Geographic area. Describe: EEC's payment rates are set separately by 6 geographic regions of the state to account for variations in cost.
 - Type of provider. Describe: EEC's rates are set separately for center based, family child care, after school, in-home, kindergarten, and Head Start providers.

Age of child. Describe: EEC's rates are set separately by age of the child with higher rates for younger age groups.

Quality level. Describe: EEC offers a 3% rate increase for any programs serving infants and toddlers through the child care subsidy program that have achieved a Level 2 or above rating in QRIS.

Other.

h) Describe any additional facts that the Lead Agency considered in determining its payment rates to ensure equal access:

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

Describe: _____

Feedback from parents, including parent surveys or parental complaints. Describe:

Other. Describe: _____

4.5 Payment Practices and the Timeliness of Payments

Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate that they have established payment practices applicable to all CCDF child care providers that include ensuring the timeliness of payments by either (1) paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services or (2) paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services. To the extent practicable, the Lead Agency must also support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by (1) paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance, (2) providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time, (3) providing full payment if a child is absent for 5 or fewer days in a month, or (4) using an alternative approach for which the Lead Agency provides a justification in its Plan (658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(I)(2)).

Lead Agencies are required to use CCDF payment practices that reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers who serve children who do not receive CCDF-funded assistance. Unless a Lead Agency is able to demonstrate that the following policies are not generally accepted in its particular state, territory, or service area or among particular categories or types of providers, Lead Agencies must (1) pay providers based on established part-time or full-time rates rather than paying for hours of service or smaller increments of time and (2) pay for reasonable, mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents (658E(c)(2)(S); 98.45(I)(3)).

In addition, there are certain other generally accepted payment practices that are required. Lead Agencies are required to ensure that child care providers receive payment for any services in accordance with a payment agreement or an authorization for services, ensure that child care providers receive prompt notice of changes to a family's eligibility status that could impact payment, and establish timely appeal and resolution processes for any payment inaccuracies and disputes (98.45(I)(4) through (6); 658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(I)(4); 98.45(I)(5); 98.45(I)(6)).

4.5.1 Certify by describing the payment practices that the Lead Agency has implemented for all CCDF child care providers,

- a) Ensure the timeliness of payments by either (Lead Agency to implement at least one of the following):
- Paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services. If implemented describe the policy or procedure. [REDACTED]
 - Paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services. If implemented describe the policy or procedure. Generally, EEC reviews, processes, and schedules payments within 5 to 10 days of receipt of any request for reimbursement. Once scheduled in the Commonwealth's accounting system, payments are made overnight. All payments by EEC are made by electronic fund transfer to contract providers and CCRRs. Many CCRRs also use electronic fund transfer to pay voucher providers based on provider preference.
- b) To the extent practicable, support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by:
- Paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance. If implemented describe the policy or procedure. [REDACTED]
 - Providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time. If implemented describe the policy or procedure. [REDACTED]
 - Providing full payment if a child is absent for 5 or fewer days in a month. If implemented describe the policy or procedure. [REDACTED]
 - Use an alternative approach for which the Lead Agency provides a justification in its Plan. If chosen, please describe the policy or procedure and the Lead Agency's justification for this approach. EEC currently pays providers in full for up to 30 absences in a rolling 6 month period. Absences above that level are considered excessive and will result in an immediate reassessment of the family's continued need for child care. Under the proposed regulations, EEC will pay for up to 45 absences in each 12 month authorization. After that point, the subsidy will not be terminated but the provider may charge the parent privately for any additional absences.
- c) Reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers who serve children who do not receive CCDF subsidies, which must include the following two practices unless the Lead Agency provides evidence that such practices are not generally accepted in its state (658E(c)(2)(S); 98.45(l)(3)). [REDACTED]
- Paying on a part-time or full-time basis (rather than paying for hours of service or smaller increments of time). Describe the policy or procedure and include a definition of the time increments (e.g., part time, full-time). EEC's rates are based on a per child, per day value based on the child's schedule and attendance. Programs serving children authorized for full time care are reimbursed up to the full day rate for any care longer than 6 hours. Programs serving children authorized for part time care are reimbursed up to the part day rate (60% of full time rate) based on child schedule and parent choice.

Paying for reasonable mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents. Describe the policy or procedure. EEC is awaiting completion of its 2018 Market Rate Survey to inform its policy on registration fees.

- d) The Lead Agency ensures that providers are paid in accordance with a written payment agreement or an authorization for services that includes, at a minimum, information regarding provider payment policies, including rates, schedules, any fees charged to providers, and the dispute-resolution process. Describe: All payment practices are detailed in the voucher agreement signed on an annual basis by voucher providers and are detailed in the contract documents for providers holding direct contracts. Providers are notified of any increase in rates if they occur during the course of the year.
- e) The Lead Agency provides prompt notice to providers regarding any changes to the family's eligibility status that could impact payments, and such a notice is sent no later than the day that the Lead Agency becomes aware that such a change will occur. Describe: Both parents and providers are issued 2-week notice of termination of subsidy if a family's eligibility changes during an authorization. Providers also have access to view the end dates of all authorizations through EEC's subsidy management system.
- f) The Lead Agency has a timely appeal and resolution process for payment inaccuracies and disputes. Describe: All disputes and resolutions are handled on a case by case basis in a prompt manner by the Associate Commissioner for Accounting and Contracts. All disputes are responded to within one business day and most disputes are resolved within 3-5 business days.

4.5.2 Do payment practices vary across regions, counties, and/or geographic areas?

- No, the practices do not vary across areas.
- Yes, the practices vary across areas. Describe:

4.6 Supply-Building Strategies To Meet the Needs of Certain Populations

Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and to improve the quality of child care services for children in underserved areas; infants and toddlers; children with disabilities, as defined by the Lead Agency; and children who receive care during non-traditional hours (658 E(c)(2)(M); 98.16 (x)).

4.6.1 For each of the following types of providers, identify any shortages in the supply of quality child care providers, the data sources used to identify shortages, and the method of tracking progress to support equal access and parental choice.

- a) Children in underserved areas: EEC does not specifically collect this data at this time.
- b) Infants and toddlers: EEC does not specifically collect this data at this time.
- c) Children with disabilities (include the Lead Agency definition in the description): EEC does not specifically collect this data at this time.
- d) Children who received care during non-traditional hours: EEC does not specifically collect this data at this time.

e) Other. Please describe any other shortages in the supply of high-quality providers. EEC does not specifically collect this data at this time.

4.6.2 Based on the analysis in 4.6.1, describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

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 4.3.2)
- Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, shared services, and leveraging
- Other. Describe:

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 4.3.2)
- Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, shared services, and leveraging
- Other. Describe:

c) Children who receive care during non-traditional hours. Check all that apply.

- Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3)
- Family child care networks
- Start-up funding
- Technical assistance support
- Recruitment of providers
- Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2)
- Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, shared services, and leveraging
- Other. Describe:

d) Other. Check and describe:

- Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3). Describe:
- Family child care networks. Describe:

- Start-up funding. Describe: [REDACTED]
- Technical assistance support. Describe: [REDACTED]
- Recruitment of providers. Describe: [REDACTED]
- Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2)
- Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, shared services, and leveraging. Describe: [REDACTED]
- Other. Describe: [REDACTED]

4.6.3 Lead Agencies must prioritize investments for increasing access to high-quality child care and development services for children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and do not currently have sufficient numbers of such programs.

- a) How does the Lead Agency define areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment? EEC does not specifically define areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment.
- b) Describe how the Lead Agency prioritizes increasing access to high-quality child care and development services for children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have high-quality programs. Rather than expanding access, the Universal Pre-Kindergarten grant in Massachusetts supports increased quality to programs that serve high needs children. Grantees are required to be a minimum of Level 3 on the QRIS and must be serving, or willing to serve, children subsidized by EEC.

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

Lead Agencies are required to certify that there are in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services in the state/territory. States and territories may allow licensing exemptions, but they must describe how such exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of CCDF children in license-exempt care. Lead Agencies also must certify that there are in effect health and safety requirements applicable to providers serving CCDF children. These health and safety requirements must be appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served, must include specific topics and training on those topics, and are subject to monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that providers are complying with the health and safety requirements.

This section covers licensing requirements, health and safety requirements and training, and monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that child care providers comply with licensing and health and safety requirements (98.16(n)) as well as exemptions (98.16(l)). This section also addresses group size limits; child-staff ratios; and required qualifications for caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.16(m)). Criminal background check requirements are included in this section (98.16(o)).

5.1 Licensing Requirements

Each state/territory must certify it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services provided within the state/territory (not restricted to providers receiving CCDF funds) and provide a detailed description of these requirements and how the requirements are effectively enforced (658E(c)(2)(F)). If any types of CCDF providers are exempt from licensing requirements, the state/territory must describe those exemptions and describe how these exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, or development of children. The descriptions must also include any exemptions based on provider category, type, or setting; length of day; and providers not subject to licensing because the number of children served falls below a Lead Agency-defined threshold and any other exemption to licensing requirements (658E(c)(2)(F); 98.16(u); 98.409(a)(2)(iv)).

- 5.1.1 To certify, describe the licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the state/territory and note if providers are exempted from licensing requirements and how such exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children (658E(c)(2)(F); 98.40(a)(2)). EEC has enacted the Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Family Child Care, Small Group and School Age and Large Group and School Age Child Care Programs found at 606 CMR 7.00 *et al.* These licensing regulations address the requirements to be met by all providers of early education and care services in the Commonwealth, whether home, school or center-based.

EEC has exempted particular groups from its licensing requirements. These groups include: any part of a public school system; any part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services; any part of a program operated by an organized educational system for the children enrolled in that particular system, unless the services of such system are primarily limited to a school age child care program, Sunday schools or classes for religious instruction conducted by a religious institution; a facility operated by a religious organization where children are cared for during short periods of time while persons responsible for such children are attending religious services; summer camps; an informal cooperative arrangement among neighbors or relatives; or the occasional care of children with or without compensation therefore. These particular exemptions do not endanger the health, safety and development of children as center-based child care operated by public schools is under the jurisdiction of other state and local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Center-based child care operated as part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services or care operated by an organized educational system, unless the services are primarily limited to a school age child care program are under the jurisdiction of local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Sunday schools, religious classes, or facilities operated by a religious organization where children are care for during short periods of time are under the jurisdiction of the religious organization and local agencies that are monitoring health and safety concerns and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an

emergency or an injury. Summer camps, which are under the jurisdiction of the local Board of Health for each city/town in the Commonwealth and subject to health and safety requirements established by the Department of Public Health, are exempt from licensure by EEC. Informal cooperative arrangements or occasional care of children is typically for short, infrequent periods of time and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an emergency or an injury.

Additionally, EEC has exempted in home and relative caregivers who receive CCDF funding, i.e., those who provide care in the child's own home or is a relative of the child. Relative caregivers, include siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, must submit evidence of their age and relationship to the child receiving care and of their age. EEC conducts Sexual Offender Registry checks on any individual seeking to provide relative care funded by the Department. In Home non-relative caregivers must have a background free of conduct which, in EEC's sole judgment, bears adversely upon their ability to provide for the safety and well-being of children. Child care vouchers cannot be issued for an In-Home, Non-Related (IHNR) caregiver until EEC has conducted a background record check (BRC) and has notified the CCRR that the individual's BRC has been approved.

5.1.2 Which providers in your state/territory are subject to licensing under this CCDF category? Check all that apply and provide a citation to the licensing rule.

Center-based child care. Provide a citation: 606 CMR 7.00

Family child care. Provide a citation: 606 CMR 7.00

In-home care. Provide a citation: _____

5.1.3 Are any providers in your state/territory that fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing (98.40(2)(i) through (iv))? If so, describe exemptions based on length of day, threshold on the number of children in care, or any other factors applicable to the exemption.

Center-based child care. If checked, describe the exemptions. As noted above, EEC exempts the following groups from care due to their oversight by other entities and as a result does not address exemptions based on length of day, the number of children in care, or other factors: any part of a public school system; any part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services; any part of a program operated by an organized educational system for the children enrolled in that particular system, unless the services of such system are primarily limited to a school age child care program, Sunday schools or classes for religious instruction conducted by a religious institution; a facility operated by a religious organization where children are cared for during short periods of time while persons responsible for such children are attending religious services. _____

Family child care. If checked, describe the exemptions. Relative child care providers: Subsidized child care may be provided by a relative of the child in a private residence if the caregiver is at least 18 years old. The caregiver may not be the child's parent, stepparent, foster parent or guardian. Relative caregivers, include siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, must

submit evidence of their age and relationship to the child receiving care and of their age. If the relative caregiver is caring for children in her own home, the total number of her own children under the age of 13 and any other children under the age of 13 present in the home while she is providing care may not exceed six. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity.

In Home/Non-Relative Child Care Providers: Caregivers unrelated to the child who are providing subsidized care must be at least 18 years old. At the time of initial registration to provide child care and at each subsequent assessment, an applicant must complete the Consent for Background Record Check for In-Home, Non-Relative Applicants form. Non-related caregivers must provide care in the child's home and may not be residents of the child's household. If the non-related caregiver is caring for children in the child's home, the total number of the caregiver's own children under the age of 13 and all of the children under the age of 13 who reside in the child's home cannot exceed six. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity. _____

In-home care. If checked, describe the exemptions. _____

5.1.4 Describe how any exemptions identified above do not endanger the health, safety, or development of children in:

- a) Center-based child care if checked in 5.1.3. These particular exemptions do not endanger the health, safety and development of children as center-based child care operated by public schools is under the jurisdiction of other state and local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Center-based child care operated as part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services or care operated by an organized educational system, unless the services are primarily limited to a school age child care program are under the jurisdiction of local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Sunday schools, religious classes, or facilities operated by a religious organization where children are care for during short periods of time are under the jurisdiction of the religious organization and local agencies that are monitoring health and safety concerns and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an emergency or an injury. Summer camps, which are under the jurisdiction of the local Board of Health for each city/town in the Commonwealth and subject to health and safety requirements established by the Department of Public Health, are exempt from licensure by EEC. Informal cooperative arrangements or occasional care of children is typically for short, infrequent periods of time and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an emergency or an injury.

- b) Family child care if checked in 5.1.3e. These particular exemptions do not endanger the health, safety and development of children as center-based child care operated by public schools is under the jurisdiction of other state and local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Center-based child care operated as part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services or care operated by an organized educational system, unless the services are primarily limited to a school age child care program are under the jurisdiction of local agencies that regulate health and safety concerns related to physical space and educator background record checks, including state and national finger print checks. Sunday schools, religious classes, or facilities operated by a religious organization where children are care for during short periods of time are under the jurisdiction of the religious organization and local agencies that are monitoring health and safety concerns and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an emergency or an injury. Summer camps, which are under the jurisdiction of the local Board of Health for each city/town in the Commonwealth and subject to health and safety requirements established by the Department of Public Health, are exempt from licensure by EEC. Informal cooperative arrangements or occasional care of children is typically for short, infrequent periods of time and often parents are nearby and easily accessible to their children in the event of an emergency or an injury.
- c) In-home care if checked in 5.1.3. [REDACTED]

5.2 Health and Safety Standards and Requirements for CCDF Providers

5.2.1 Standards on ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for CCDF providers.

Lead Agencies are required to establish child care standards for providers receiving CCDF funds, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, that address appropriate ratios between the number of children and number of providers in terms of the age of the children, group size limits for specific age populations, and the required qualifications for providers (658E(c)(2)(H); 98.41(d); 98.16(m)). For ease of responding, this section is organized by CCDF categories of care, licensing status, and age categories.

a) Licensed CCDF center-based care

1. Infant

- How does the State/territory define infant (age range): An infant is defined as child under 15 months of age.
- Ratio: 1 educator : 3 infants; or 2 educators : 7 infants
- Group size: max. group size 7
- Teacher/caregiver qualifications: Infant/Toddler teacher: must be at least 21 years of age or have a high school diploma or equivalent and meet one of the following sets of requirements: Have successfully completed 3 credits in category Child

Growth and Development and have nine months of work experience or one practicum; or Have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; or Have graduated from a two-year high school vocational program in early childhood education, approved by the Department for both the education and experience requirements and have been evaluated and recommended by the program instructor. The following education may substitute for a portion of the required work experience: An Associate's or Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field of study may substitute for six months of the required experience. A Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field of study may substitute for three months of the required experience. For infant-toddler teachers, one continuing education unit (ten hours of instruction) in category Infant and Toddler Development, Care and Program Planning may substitute for three months of work experience. To be qualified as an infant/toddler teacher, three months of the required work experience must be in caregiving to infant/toddlers

2. Toddler

- How does the State/territory define toddler (age range): A toddler is defined as a child who is at least 15 months of age, but under 33 months of age
- Ratio: 1 educator : 4 toddlers; or 2 educators : 9 toddlers
- Group size: max. group size is 9
- Teacher/caregiver qualifications: Infant/Toddler teacher: must be at least 21 years of age or have a high school diploma or equivalent and meet one of the following sets of requirements: Have successfully completed 3 credits in category Child Growth and Development and have nine months of work experience or one practicum; or Have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; or Have graduated from a two-year high school vocational program in early childhood education, approved by the Department for both the education and experience requirements and have been evaluated and recommended by the program instructor. The following education may substitute for a portion of the required work experience: An Associate's or Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field of study may substitute for six months of the required experience. A Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field of study may substitute for three months of the required experience. For infant-toddler teachers, one continuing education unit (ten hours of instruction) in category Infant and Toddler Development, Care and Program Planning may substitute for three months of work experience. To be qualified as an infant/toddler teacher, three months of the required work experience must be in caregiving to infant/toddlers.

3. Preschool

- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range): A preschool age child is defined as any child at least 2.9 years, but not yet attending first grade
- Ratio: 1 educator : 10 preschool age children; or 2 educators : 20 preschool age children
- Group size: max. group size is 20
- Teacher/caregiver qualifications: Preschool teacher: must be at least 21 years of age or have a high school diploma or equivalent and meet one of the following sets of requirements: Have successfully completed 3 credits in category Child Growth

and Development and have nine months of work experience or one practicum; or Have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; or Have graduated from a two-year high school vocational program in early childhood education, approved by the Department for both the education and experience requirements and have been evaluated and recommended by the program instructor. The following education may substitute for a portion of the required work experience: An Associate's or Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field of study may substitute for six months of the required experience. A Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field of study may substitute for three months of the required experience. To be qualified as a preschool teacher, three months of the required work experience must be in caregiving to preschool age children.

4. School-age

- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range): A school age child is defined as a kindergarten child or a child who is attending a public or approved private elementary school.
 - Ratio: 1 educator : 13 school age children; or 2 educators : 26 school age children
 - Group size: max. group size is 26
 - Teacher/caregiver qualifications: Group leader: Shall be at least 18 years of age and meet one of the following sets of requirements: Have a Bachelor's Degree or an Associate's Degree; and have three months of experience working with school age children; or Have a high school diploma or equivalent; and have six months of experience working with school age children including three months of supervised experience at a school age child care program; or Have nine months of experience with school age children including three months of supervised experience at a school age child care program.
5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe which requirements apply to exempt centers. For DPH regulated summer camps, the following ratios are required: residential and day camps shall have at least one supervisory staff person for every ten campers over the age of six. There shall be one supervisory staff person for every five campers age six or under. Junior counselors may be included in meeting up to one half of the camper/staff ratio within each unit, living or general activity group, but only if they have received training and supervision to verify their ability to handle camper groups independently. See 105 CMR 430.101. For license exempt public school afterschool programs, schools are expected to follow local requirements; however, the recommended ratio is 1:13, which is identical to EEC's school age ratio requirement.
6. Describe, if applicable, ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for classrooms with mixed age groups. For mixed Infant/Toddler groups, EEC child care licensing regulations set forth the following group size limitations: no more than 9 children, of which no more than 3 infants may be infants. In addition, the regulations establish the following educator to child ratios for mixed Infant/Toddler groups: 1:3 or 2:9. In a mixed Infant/Toddler group, there must be at least one Infant/Toddler teacher whose qualifications are described in 5.2.1 (a) 1, above. For mixed Toddler/Preschool groups, EEC child care licensing regulations restrict group size for the classroom to no more than 9 children with educator to child ratios of 1:5 or 2:9. In a mixed Toddler/Preschool group,

there must be at least one Infant/Toddler teacher and one Preschool teacher whose qualifications are described in 5.2.1 (a) 1 and (a) 2, above. For mixed Preschool/School Age groups, group size for the classroom is restricted to no more than 20 children with a maximum age of 8 years and educator to child ratios of 1:10 or 2:20. There must be at least one qualified Preschool teacher in a mixed Preschool/School Age group as described in 5.2.1 (a) 2, above.

7. Describe the director qualifications for licensed CCDF center-based care. Must be at least 21 years of age and have met one of the following sets of requirements for education and experience. At least nine months of work experience or one practicum must be with either infants and toddlers or preschoolers (if with infants /toddlers, the total work experience is reduced by 1/3): High school diploma or equivalent; and 12 credits in at least 4 categories of study except Child Care Administration including 3 credits in Child Growth and Development and 2 credits in Planning Programs, Curriculum, or Classroom management or 3 credits in infant/toddler care; and 36 months of work experience; High school diploma or equivalent CDA credential in Center-based, home visitor or family child care setting with a preschool or infant/toddler endorsement and 27 months of work experience; Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education or related field of study and 12 credits in at least 4 categories of study except Child Care Administration including 3 credits in Child Growth and Development and 2 credits in Planning Programs, Curriculum, or Classroom management or 3 credits in infant/toddler care; and 18 months of work experience; Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field of study and 12 credits in at least 4 categories of study except Child Care Administration including 3 credits in Child Growth and Development and 2 credits in Planning Programs, Curriculum, or Classroom management or 3 credits in infant/toddler care; and 18 months of work experience; Bachelor's or advanced degree in Early Childhood Education or in a related field of study and 12 credits in at least 4 categories of study except Child Care Administration including 3 credits in Child Growth and Development and 2 credits in Planning Programs, Curriculum, or Classroom management or 3 credits in infant/toddler care; and 9 months of work experience; Alternative Early Childhood Training Program and 12 credits in at least 4 categories of study except Child Care Administration including 3 credits in Child Growth and Development and 2 credits in Planning Programs, Curriculum, or Classroom management or 3 credits in infant/toddler care; and 27 months of work experience; Certification as an Early Intervention Specialist by the MA Department of Public Health K-3 Teacher for Young Children with Special Needs Certification from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Have 6 months of work experience after meeting the above qualifications (Lead Teacher qualifications), have evidence of satisfactory completion of at least 2 credits or 3 CEUS in category Child Care Administration; and have evidence of completion of at least 2 additional credits or 3 CEUs in any of the following categories: Child Growth and Development, Birth - Eight Years. Planning Programs and Environments for Young Children Curriculum for Early Childhood Settings Child and Classroom Management Advanced or Specialized Early Childhood Education or Development Children with Special Needs, Birth through 16 years. Infant and Toddler Development, Care, and Program Planning Health and Safety in Early Childhood Families and Community Child Care Policy Supervision or Staff Development in Early Childhood Education Child Observation, Documentation and Assessment

b) Licensed CCDF family child care provider

1. Infant

- How does the State/territory define infant (age range): An infant is defined as child under 15 months of age
- Ratio: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- Group size: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- Teacher/caregiver qualifications: All family child care educators must be at least 18 years of age. Prior to being licensed for the first time to provide family child care an applicant must submit evidence of current certification in basic first aid and CPR that is age appropriate for all of the children in care. In addition: 1. an applicant for a license to care for six or fewer children must have at least the following: a. one year of experience as a parent; or b. one year of full-time experience, or the equivalent, in caring for children younger than 12 years of age; or c. nine months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 14 years of age and completion of 15 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC educator orientation; or d. six months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 12 years of age and completion of 30 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC orientation; or e. qualification as a teacher or site coordinator by EEC 2. An applicant for a license to care for seven or eight children, at least two of whom must be school age, must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a pre-service training approved by the Department; and either a. two years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant and i. one additional year caring for unrelated children in a group setting; or ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience.

bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for nine months of the required additional experience. 3. An applicant for a license to care for nine or ten children must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a five hour pre-service training approved by the Department and either a. three years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant, or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; and one of the following: i. two additional years caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator and one additional year of experience caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience.bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education will substitute for nine months of the additional required experience

2. Toddler

- **How does the State/territory define toddler (age range):** A toddler is defined as a child who is at least 15 months of age, but under 33 months of age
- **Ratio:** For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- **Group size:** For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- **Teacher/caregiver qualifications:** All family child care educators must be at least 18 years of age. Prior to being licensed for the first time to provide family child care an applicant must submit evidence of current certification in basic first aid and CPR that is age appropriate for all of the children in care. In addition: 1. an applicant for a license to care for six or fewer children must have at least the following: a. one year of experience as a parent; or b. one year of full-time experience, or the equivalent, in caring for children younger than 12 years of age; or c. nine months of

full-time experience in caring for children younger than 14 years of age and completion of 15 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC educator orientation; or d. six months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 12 years of age and completion of 30 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC orientation; or e. qualification as a teacher or site coordinator by EEC 2. An applicant for a license to care for seven or eight children, at least two of whom must be school age, must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a pre-service training approved by the Department; and either a. two years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant and i. one additional year caring for unrelated children in a group setting; or ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience. bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for nine months of the required additional experience. 3. An applicant for a license to care for nine or ten children must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a five hour pre-service training approved by the Department and either a. three years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant, or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; and one of the following: i. two additional years caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator and one additional year of experience caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience. bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education will substitute for nine months of the additional required experience

3. Preschool

- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range): A preschool age child is defined as any child at least 2.9 years, but not yet attending first grade.
- Ratio: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- Group size: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer

children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.

- **Teacher/caregiver qualifications:** All family child care educators must be at least 18 years of age. Prior to being licensed for the first time to provide family child care an applicant must submit evidence of current certification in basic first aid and CPR that is age appropriate for all of the children in care. In addition: 1. an applicant for a license to care for six or fewer children must have at least the following: a. one year of experience as a parent; or b. one year of full-time experience, or the equivalent, in caring for children younger than 12 years of age; or c. nine months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 14 years of age and completion of 15 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC educator orientation; or d. six months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 12 years of age and completion of 30 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC orientation; or e. qualification as a teacher or site coordinator by EEC 2. An applicant for a license to care for seven or eight children, at least two of whom must be school age, must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a pre-service training approved by the Department; and either a. two years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant and i. one additional year caring for unrelated children in a group setting; or ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience. bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for nine months of the required additional experience. 3. An applicant for a license to care for nine or ten children must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a five hour pre-service training approved by the Department and either a. three years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant, or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; and one of the following: i. two additional years caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator and one additional year of experience caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience. bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education will substitute for nine months of the additional required experience

4. School-age

- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range): A school age child is defined as a kindergarten child or a child who is attending a public or approved private elementary school.
- Ratio: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- Group size: For six or fewer children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. For six or fewer children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old. For seven or eight children with 1 educator - No more than three children younger than two years old, including at least one toddler who is walking independently. Additional children must be older than 24 months. All children over capacity of six must be school age. For seven to ten children with 2 educators - No more than six children younger than two years old, including no more than three infants. For seven to ten children with 3 educators - No more than six infants. Additional children must be 15 months of age or older.
- Teacher/caregiver qualifications: All family child care educators must be at least 18 years of age. Prior to being licensed for the first time to provide family child care an applicant must submit evidence of current certification in basic first aid and CPR that is age appropriate for all of the children in care. In addition: 1. an applicant for a license to care for six or fewer children must have at least the following: a. one year of experience as a parent; or b. one year of full-time experience, or the equivalent, in caring for children younger than 12 years of age; or c. nine months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 14 years of age and completion of 15 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC educator orientation; or d. six months of full-time experience in caring for children younger than 12 years of age and completion of 30 hours of training, approved by the Department, not including the EEC orientation; or e. qualification as a teacher or site coordinator by EEC 2. An applicant for a license to care for seven or eight children, at least two of whom must be school age, must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a pre-service training approved by the Department; and either a. two years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant and i. one additional year caring for unrelated children in a group setting; or ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience.

bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for nine months of the required additional experience. 3. An applicant for a license to care for nine or ten children must have evidence of having completed within one year prior to application a five hour pre-service training approved by the Department and either a. three years of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant, or b. one year of experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; and one of the following: i. two additional years caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant; ii. EEC certification as a teacher or site coordinator and one additional year of experience caring for unrelated children in a group setting, which may include experience as a family child care licensee or certified assistant. aa. An additional three credits in education or early childhood education may substitute for six months of the required additional experience.bb. An additional six credits in education or early childhood education will substitute for nine months of the additional required experience

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt family child care homes, please describe which requirements apply to exempt homes. EEC requires licensure whenever any individual provides care to at least one unrelated child outside of the child's home. EEC does allow some exemptions to family child care for an informal cooperative arrangement or the occasional care of children. First, EEC determines if care is being provided on a regular basis. A family child care home is operating on a "regular basis" if the care is available for more than one day per week and for more than eight weeks in a twelve-month period. If the care being provided does not meet both of these criteria, it is not subject to licensure. Occasional care occurs when no child is present more than one day per week or more than a total of 8 hours in a week, or when no child is in care for more than 30 days from the initial date of placement. If the care provided does not exceed either of these limits, then it is not subject to licensure. Care taking is an informal cooperative arrangement among neighbors or relatives if any of the following circumstances apply: all children in care are related to the caretaker by blood, marriage or adoption; or parents care for each other's children on an equal, informal basis. They do so by feeding, napping, diapering or supervising the child(ren). There are no hired personnel and no-one receives monetary or non-monetary compensation for their services; or care is provided to only one child unrelated to the caretaker and is determined to be informal and cooperative because the relationship between the caretaker and parent(s) is based on friendship or common interests such as school, community, church, charitable or volunteer work or similar activities, and the relationship between the parents and the caretaker pre-dates the care taking situation. In making any determination on an application for exemption, EEC will consider whether the caretaker is currently or was formally licensed by the Department and if so, whether EEC has taken legal action against the caretaker or accepted a voluntary surrender of a license in circumstances where enforcement would have been justified. Further, EEC will consider whether the caretaker cooperated with EEC and was truthful in providing the information necessary to evaluate the exemption request.

c) In-home CCDF providers:

1. Describe the ratios. If a relative caregiver is providing care for children in her own home, the total number of her own children under the age of 13 and any other children

under the age of 13 present in the home while she is providing care may not exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity. If a non-related caregiver is caring for children in the child's own home, the total number of the caregiver's own children under the age of 13 and all of the children under the age of 13 who reside in the child's home cannot exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity.

2. Describe the group size. If a relative caregiver is providing care for children in her own home, the total number of her own children under the age of 13 and any other children under the age of 13 present in the home while she is providing care may not exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity. If a non-related caregiver is caring for children in the child's own home, the total number of the caregiver's own children under the age of 13 and all of the children under the age of 13 who reside in the child's home cannot exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity.
3. Describe the threshold for when licensing is required. Relative and in-home/non relative providers are authorized to care for specific children through a parent's voucher. The caretaker is prohibited from caring for other children who are not reimbursed through subsidy. If a caretaker provides care on a regular basis to more than one child unrelated to the caretaker or to the child in care, licensing is required.
4. Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time. If a relative caregiver is providing care for children in her own home, the total number of her own children under the age of 13 and any other children under the age of 13 present in the home while she is providing care may not exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity. If a non-related caregiver is caring for children in the child's own home, the total number of the caregiver's own children under the age of 13 and all of the children under the age of 13 who reside in the child's home cannot exceed 6.
5. Describe if the state/territory requires related children to be included in the child-to-provider ratio or group size. Yes

6. Describe any limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day. If a relative caregiver is providing care for children in her own home, the total number of her own children under the age of 13 and any other children under the age of 13 present in the home while she is providing care may not exceed 6. Children under the age of 16 with special needs shall be included in determining a caregiver's capacity. If a non-related caregiver is caring for children in the child's own home, the total number of the caregiver's own children under the age of 13 and all of the children under the age of 13 who reside in the child's home cannot exceed 6.

5.2.2 Health and safety standards for CCDF providers.

States and territories must establish health and safety standards for programs (e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, etc.) serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to the topics listed below, as appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served (98.41(a)). This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving CCDF funds regardless of licensing status (i.e., licensed or license-exempt). The only exception to this requirement is for providers who are caring for their own relatives because Lead Agencies have the option of exempting relatives from some or all CCDF health and safety requirements (98.42(c)).

To certify, describe how the following health and safety standards for programs serving children receiving CCDF assistance are defined and established on the required topics (98.16(l)). Note – This question is different from the health and safety training requirements, which are addressed in question 5.2.3.

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)
 - Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The Department requires that all programs must follow exclusion policies for serious illnesses, contagious diseases and reportable diseases in conformance with the Department of Public Health and must notify all parents when any communicable disease or condition has been introduced into the program. Additionally, all educators must be trained in infection control procedures such as hand washing for children and themselves; washing and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment, toys and personal items; and clean-up of bodily fluids and blood
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(9) and (10) .
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). In large group and school age programs, smooth, surfaced, non-porous floors and mops used for cleaning must be washed and disinfected at least daily. Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate prevention and control of infectious diseases when caring for children. However, they will be trained on the same in the near future

- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes
2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices
- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Programs serving infants must place infants on their backs for sleeping, unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise in writing; nap infants in individual cribs, portacribs, playpens or bassinets; ensure that cribs have firm, properly fitted mattresses with clean coverings, and do not contain any potential head entrapment areas; ensure that slats on cribs are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart and ensure that cribs, portacribs, playpens or bassinets used for sleeping infants younger than 12 months of age do not contain pillows, comforters, stuffed animals or other soft padded materials.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(13)(e)
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate safe sleep practices when caring for infants. However, they will be trained on the same in the near future. For family child care programs, the educator must visually observe napping children at least every 15 minutes. When children are placed in a separate room for naps, the door must be ajar.
 - Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. Children younger than 6 months of age at the time of enrollment in a program must be under direct visual supervision at all times, including while napping, during the first six weeks they are in care.
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes
3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent
- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Each licensee must have a written policy regarding administration of prescription and non-prescription medication and its disposal. All prescriptions must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed and with their original labels affixed. Emergency medications such as epinephrine auto-injectors must be immediately available for use as needed. Each time medication is administered, the educator must document in the child's record the name of the medication, the dosage, the time and the method of administration, and who administered the medication. The licensee must also maintain as part of a child's record, an individual health care plan for each child with a chronic medical condition, which contains the condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(2) and (3)
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently license exempt providers are not required to have a written policy regarding administration of prescription and non-prescription medication. However, they will be trained on medication

administration in the near future. Large group and school age programs must have access to Health Care Consultant

- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. Educators may, with written parental consent and authorization of a licensed health care practitioner, develop and implement an individual health care plan that permits older school age children to carry their own inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors and use them as needed, without the direct supervision of an educator. If an individual health care plan provides for a child to carry his or her own medication, the licensee must maintain on-site a back-up supply of the medication for use as needed
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

4. Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Each licensee must post in a manner that protects the privacy of each child: a list of all emergency or life saving medications, including but not limited to epinephrine auto-injectors, inhalers, and anti-seizure medications, that specifies to which children they belong; and a list of allergies and/or other emergency medical information provided by the parent for each child. Educators must follow the directions of the parents and /or the child's physician regarding any food allergies of a child.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.04(14)(c); 606 CMR 7.12(4).
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to post a list of allergies for children in their care. However, they will be trained on allergy and food reactions in the near future. Large group and school age programs must have a written health care policy that includes a plan for meeting individual children's specific health care needs, including the procedure for identifying children with allergies and protecting children from that to which they are allergic.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury, such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must ensure that the physical facilities are safe, clean, in good repair and free from hazards and clutter. The licensee must monitor the environment daily to identify and remove or repair any hazards that may cause injury to children. The licensee must maintain or have access to, an outdoor play area that is free from hazards including not limited to: a busy street, a parking lot, poisonous plants, water hazards, debris, broken glass, chipping, peeling or flaking paint, dangerous machinery or tools, and weather related and environmental hazards or small objects that could present a choking hazard to younger children. Any such hazards must be removed or fenced by a

sturdy, permanently installed barrier which is at least 4 feet high or otherwise protected or removed, as appropriate. For programs that offer swimming, boating or other water activities, the licensee must ensure that the area is safe and children are directly supervised at all times during activities involving water, including tubs, pools, showers or standing water. All electrical outlets within the reach of children younger than school age must be made inaccessible by use of a safety device or covering that prevents access to the receptacle openings

- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.07 (1), (7)(d), (9) and (10)(o).
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate to EEC the safety of their home/location from physical hazards. However, they will be trained on physical hazards in the near future.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment.

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The following practices are strictly prohibited in early education and care programs: spanking or other corporal punishment of children; subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment including any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats or derogatory remarks; depriving children of outdoor time, meals or snacks, force feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will; disciplining a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet; confining a child to a swing, high chair, crib, playpen or other piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision, and excessive time-out. Time-out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within an educator's view.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.05 (8)
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate to EEC that they have knowledge of the prevention of shaken baby syndrome and child maltreatment. However, they will be trained on such prevention in the near future.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-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)). Emergency preparedness and response planning (at the child care provider level) must also include procedures for evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place and lockdown; staff and volunteer training and practice drills; communications and reunification with families; continuity of operations; and accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must have a written plan detailing procedures for meeting potential emergencies including but not limited to the evacuation of children from the program in the event of a fire, natural disaster, loss of power, heat or hot water or other emergency situation. The plan must include a method to obtain information from local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or shelter in place in the event of a natural disaster, escape routes from each floor level approved for child care, a designated meeting place outside and away from the child care program, a method of contacting the appropriate authorities after the program has been evacuated, a method of communicating with parents in the event of an emergency evacuation; and a means to assure that no child is left in the program after evacuation.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(7)
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to submit an emergency preparedness and response plan to EEC. However, they will be trained on how to plan for emergencies in the near future. In a family child care program, the plan for potential emergencies must include the name and telephone number of a potential emergency caregiver who will be available to arrive at the child care home within 10 minutes of being summoned to provide temporary child care in case of a medical emergency.
 - Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes
8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants
- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Educators must ensure that all hazardous objects, including but not limited to matches, lighters, toxic materials, sharp objects, plastic bags and purses are locked or inaccessible to children. Toxic substances must be stored separately from food and medications and must be labeled as to the contents and antidote.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.07(13)(g).
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate that they are knowledgeable of the handling and storage of hazardous materials. However, they will be trained on hazardous materials and bio-contaminants in the near future.
 - Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes
9. Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)
- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must have a written plan for the safety and supervision of all children during transport. The plan must describe how children are transported to and from the program, in an emergency and on a field trip. Whenever a licensee provides or contracts for transportation for

children, the licensee must establish policies and procedures that are intended to keep children safe during transport. Additionally, the licensee must ensure that any vehicle used for transportation is registered and inspected in accordance with the law of the state, at least one person on each vehicle is currently certified in first aid and CPR and that there is a plan for attendance before and after each trip and a complete vehicle inspection after every trip to ensure that children are not left alone in a vehicle at any time.

- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.13.
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to ensure to EEC the safety and supervision of children in their care during transport. However, they will be trained on precautions in transporting children in the near future.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

10. Pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) All licensees, certified assistants, and any educator who may be alone with children must maintain current certification of training in basic first aid and CPR, in accordance with EEC policy. The licensee must ensure that at least one educator currently certified in first aid and age-appropriate CPR is present at any and all times when children are in care.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.09(15) and 7.11 (1).
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required by EEC to maintain current certification of training in basic first aid and CPR.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Child educators are mandated reporters and must, by law, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. Pursuant to EEC policy, licensees must have written plans for staff to file reports of abuse or neglect, In particular, these policies must comply with the requirements regarding the responsibilities of mandated reporters. The definition of mandated reporter includes administrators of licensed agencies as well as any person paid by such agencies to work with children in placement, i.e. teachers, residential care staff, vocational staff, recreational staff, medical staff, case managers, clinical staff and foster parents. All such persons must be trained by the licensee regarding their responsibility to report allegations of abuse or neglect and the method for filing these reports.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(4).

- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required by EEC to complete a mandatory reporter training. However, they will be trained on how to recognize and report child abuse and neglect in the near future.
- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care. n/a
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

a) The Lead Agency may also include optional standards related to the following:

1. Nutrition

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must design and implement a nutrition program that meets the USDA guidelines for the nutritional and dietary needs and feeding requirements of each child, including those with disabilities. All educators must receive basic training in USDA recognized nutrition requirements for the healthy growth and development of children and in food choking hazards.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.12
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required by EEC to complete nutrition training. However, they will be trained on nutrition requirements for the healthy growth and development of children in the near future. In programs serving infants and toddlers, a current feeding schedule must be maintained and infants must be held while fed a bottle. In programs serving preschool and school age children, the licensee must provide regular, nutritious snacks for children in care for less than four hours. The licensee must schedule meals, in addition to snacks, for children in care four hours or longer. In small and large group and school age programs, the licensee must designate one person to be responsible for the food program.
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

2. Access to physical activity

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must have evidence of a plan describing daily indoor and outdoor time periods, weather permitting, which include both small and large muscle activities, with at least 60 minutes of physical activity in full day programs.
- List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.06(1)(b)4-5.
- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required by EEC to provide access to physical activity for children in care. However, they will be trained on the importance of physical activity in the near future.
- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

3. Caring for children with special needs

- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) The licensee must accept applications and make reasonable accommodations to welcome or continue to serve any child with a disability or special needs. The licensee must identify at least one educator to serve as the liaison for each child with a disability and coordinate care within the program and with service providers and communicating with the child's parents, service providers and educators.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.04(13)
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). Currently, license exempt providers are not required to demonstrate to EEC knowledge of how to care for children with special needs. However, they will be trained on how to care for children with a disability or special needs in the near future.
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes
4. Any other areas determined necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety (98.44(b)(1)(iii)). Describe: Toothbrushing
- Provide a brief summary of how the standard(s) is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.) Educators must assist children in brushing their teeth whenever they are in care for more than four hours or whenever they consume a meal while in care. Children must use individual, labeled toothbrushes which must be stored in a safe and sanitary manner open to the air without touching each other.
 - List the citation for these requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(11)(d) – (e).
 - Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt). License exempt providers are not required to ensure that children brush their teeth while in care.
 - Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement. Yes

5.2.3 Health and safety training for CCDF providers on required topics.

Lead Agencies are required to have minimum pre-service or orientation training requirements (to be completed within 3 months), as appropriate to the provider setting and the age of children served, that address the health and safety topics described in 5.2.2, and child development. Lead Agencies must also have ongoing training requirements on the health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors of children receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(l)(i); 98.44(b)(1)(iii)). The state/territory must describe its requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing training. These trainings should be part of a broader systematic approach and progression of professional development (as described in section 6) within a state/territory. Lead Agencies have flexibility in determining the number of training hours to require, but they may consult with *Caring for our Children Basics* for best practices and the recommended time needed to address these training requirements.

Pre-Service or Orientation Training Requirements

- a) Provide the minimum number of pre-service or orientation training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following:

1. Licensed child care centers: EEC licensing regulations establish minimum qualifications for all educators, which require up to 5 hours of pre-service training based on education and experience. In addition, all educators are required to complete a program orientation. The orientation must include: review of the program's health care policy, including medication administration policies and infant sleeping positions; information contained in the children's records that is pertinent to the education and care of the children; child guidance policies and procedures for protecting children from abuse and neglect, emergency plans and procedures, and transportation plans
 2. Licensed FCC homes: All applicants for family child care must submit evidence of current certification in basic first aid and CPR. A potential licensee must also complete up to 30 pre-service training hours, as approved by the Department, depending on the number of children s/he seek to serve and the education/experience of the applicant. In addition to the pre-service qualifications, all family child care applicants must complete a program orientation pertaining to the operation of the program, including but not limited to, emergency procedures, variances, first aid, supervision, child guidance, individual health care plans, infant safe sleep, and curriculum planning.
 3. In-home care: Prior to providing care, in-home, non-related caregivers must attend an orientation provided by the Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCRR).
 4. Variations for exempt provider settings: Prior to entering into a voucher agreement, license exempt providers must participate in an orientation conducted by the CCRR.
- b) Provide the length of time that providers have to complete trainings subsequent to being hired (must be 3 months or fewer) _____
- c) Identify below the pre-service or orientation training requirements for each topic (98.41(a)(1)(i through xi)).
1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(9) and (10)
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 - Yes
 - No
 2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(13)(e)
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 - Yes
 - No
 3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(13)(e) _____
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 - Yes
 - No

4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.04(14)(c); 606 CMR 7.12(4).
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No
5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.07 (1), (7)(d), (9) and (10)(o).
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No
6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.05(8)
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No
7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(7)
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No
8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.07(13)(g).
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No
9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)
 - Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.13
 - Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes

No

10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.09(15) and 7.11 (1).
- Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(4)
- Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No

12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.09(9)
- Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No

13. Describe other requirements

- Provide the citation for other training requirements. The Department also requires training of educators in such areas as injury prevention, use of off-site facilities, care of mildly ill children, personal hygiene, diapering and toileting, sleep, rest and quiet activity, evening and overnight care, and pets. 606 CMR 7.11(5) – (6), (8), (11) – (16).
- Does the state/territory require that this training topic(s) be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?
 Yes
 No

Ongoing Training Requirements

5.2.4 Provide the minimum number of annual training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following.

- a) Licensed child care centers: Educators working in licensed center-based early education and care programs working fewer than ten hours per week shall complete a minimum of five hours of professional development activities per year; educators working at least ten but fewer than 20 hours per week shall complete a minimum of 12 hours of professional development activities per year; and all educators working 20 or more hours per week shall complete a minimum of 20 hours of professional development activities annually. At least

one-third of the professional development hours must address the needs of diverse learners.

- b) Licensed FCC homes: All educators in family child care working more than 25 hours per year but less than 10 hours per week must complete at least 5 hours of professional development activities per year. Educators in family child care working more than 10 hours per week must complete at least 10 hours of professional development activities annually. At least one-third of the professional development hours must address diverse learners.
- c) In-home care: Currently, there are no annual training hours for in-home, non-related caregivers per year.
- d) Variations for exempt provider settings: Currently, there are no annual training hours required by EEC for exempt provider settings.

5.2.5 Describe the ongoing health and safety training for CCDF providers by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(9) and (10)
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed.

2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(13)(e)
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed

3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(2) and (3)
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed.

4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.04(14)(c); 606 CMR 7.12(4).
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.07 (1), (7)(d), (9) and (10)(o).
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.
 Other. Describe As needed.
6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.05(8)
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.
 Other. Describe As needed.
7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(7)
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.
 Other. Describe As needed.
8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.07(13)(g).
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.
 Other. Describe As needed.
9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.13
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.
 Other. Describe As needed
10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification
- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.09(15) and 7.11 (1).
 - How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?
 Annually.

Other. Describe _____

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. 606 CMR 7.11(4)
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed.

12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

- Provide the citation for this training requirement. Not applicable at this time.
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed.

13. Describe other requirements. The Department also requires training of educators in such areas as injury prevention, use of off-site facilities, care of mildly ill children, personal hygiene, diapering and toileting, sleep, rest and quiet activity, evening and overnight care, and pets

- Provide the citation for other training requirements. 606 CMR 7.11(5) – (6), (8), (11) – (16).
- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed?

Annually.

Other. Describe As needed.

5.3 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices for CCDF Providers

5.3.1 Enforcement of licensing and health and safety requirements

Lead agencies must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements, including those described in 98.41 (98.42(a)). This may include, but is not limited to, any systems used to ensure that providers complete health and safety trainings, any documentation required to be maintained by child care providers or any other monitoring procedures to ensure compliance. Note – Inspection requirements are described starting in 5.3.2.

To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements. The Department has begun a process of differential licensing to ensure annually that all licensed and approved early childhood education programs meet all applicable State and local health and safety requirements. Additionally, all licensees are required to obtain and maintain evidence that personnel are currently certified, licensed or registered where applicable laws and regulations require

certification, licensure or registration, including but not limited to, driver's licenses and EEC registration.

5.3.2 Inspections for licensed CCDF providers.

Lead agencies must require licensing inspectors to perform inspections—with no fewer than one pre-licensure inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards—of each child care provider and facility in the state/territory. Licensing inspectors are required to perform no fewer than one annual, unannounced inspection of each licensed CCDF provider for compliance with all child care licensing standards; it shall include an inspection for compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards; inspectors may inspect for compliance with all three standards—health, safety, and fire—at the same time (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(II); 98.16 (n); 98.42(b)(2)(i)).

Certify by responding to the questions below to describe your state/territory's monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that licensed child care providers comply with licensing standards, including compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards.

a) Licensed CCDF center-based child care

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed child care center providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards. Upon receipt of an application for licensure, licensors from the Department conduct a pre-licensure inspection of child care center providers to ensure compliance with health, safety and fire standards as well as EEC regulations.
2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF child care center providers. Annually, EEC licensors will conduct an unannounced visit and inspection of all licensed and approved child care center providers at reasonable times to determine whether such program is being operated in compliance with the law and any EEC regulations governing such programs.
3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:
 - Once a year
 - More than once a year. Describe _____
4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that child care center providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards. The Differential Licensing Visit lifecycle for small, large group and school aged program in good standing consists of two consecutive annual monitoring visits with the monitoring tool and a licensing renewal visit every second year. The key indicators in the SLGA monitoring tool consist of care of children, health, review of the physical space (both indoor and outdoor), administration, and transportation. The enhanced monitoring tool includes a more thorough review of health and safety regulations which represent groupings of regulations that when in non-compliance pose the highest probability or severity of harm or death to a child, the provider's non-compliances cited in the last visit or corrective actions described in the corrective action plan from previous visit, if any, and regulations pertaining to Human Resources (HR), personnel records, and treatment documentation.

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF center providers 102 CMR 1.06

b) Licensed CCDF family child care home

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed family child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards. Upon receipt of an application for licensure, licensors from the Department conduct a pre-licensure inspection of family child care homes to ensure compliance with health, safety and fire standards as well as EEC regulations.
2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for at least annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF family child care providers. Annually, EEC licensors will conduct an unannounced visit and inspection of all licensed family child care homes at reasonable times to determine whether such programs are being operated in compliance with the law and any EEC regulations governing such programs.
3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:
 - Once a year
 - More than once a year. Describe _____
4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that CCDF family child care providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards. The Differential Licensing visit lifecycle for a Family Child Care educator in good standing consists of two consecutive annual monitoring visits with the monitoring tool and a licensing renewal visit every third year with either the enhanced monitoring tool or the full licensing review tool. The monitoring tool addresses key indicators such as physical space, both indoor and outdoor, routine and activities, interactions with children, and the administration of the program. The enhanced monitoring tool is a more thorough review of the health and safety regulations which includes a review of the key indicators, a review of the administration section of the full licensing review tool, and a review of non-compliance issues or corrective actions described in corrective action plans from prior monitoring visits or previous visits.
5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF family child care providers 102 CMR 1.06

c) Licensed in-home CCDF child care

- N/A. In-home CCDF child care (care in the child's own home) is not licensed in the State/Territory. Skip to
1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed in-home child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards. _____
 2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for at least annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF in-home child care providers. _____
 3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:
 - Once a year
 - More than once a year. Describe _____

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that in-home CCDF child care providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to inspect in-home CCDF child care providers.
 5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed in-home CCDF providers EEC has not yet amended its regulations regarding inspections for in-home CCDF child care providers.
- d) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting pre-licensure inspections and unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers. ☒

5.3.3 Lead Agencies must have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) to perform an annual monitoring visit of each license-exempt CCDF provider for compliance with health, safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41), and fire standards (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(IV); 98.42(b)(2)(ii)). Lead Agencies have the option to exempt relative providers (as described in section (658P(6)(B)) from this requirement. To certify, respond to the questions below to describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of:

- a) License-exempt center-based CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to annually visit and inspect license-exempt center-based CCDF child care providers.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to annually visit and inspect license-exempt center-based CCDF child care providers.

- b) License-exempt family child care CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used. Not applicable. All family child care is licensed

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. n/a

- c) License-exempt in-home CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, if relative care is exempt from monitoring, and if differential monitoring is used. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to annually visit license-exempt in-home CCDF child care providers.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. EEC has not yet amended its regulations regarding inspections for license-exempt in-home CCDF child care providers.

5.3.4 The Lead Agency must have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) to perform an annual monitoring visit of each license-exempt CCDF provider for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(IV); 98.42(b)(2)(ii)). The state/territory may determine if exempt relative providers (as described in section (658P(6)(B)) do not need to meet this requirement. At a

minimum, the health and safety requirements to be inspected must address the standards listed in 5.1.4 (98.41(a)). To certify, describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of:

- a) License-exempt center-based CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to annually visit and inspect license-exempt center-based CCDF child care providers.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. EEC has not yet amended its regulations regarding inspections for license-exempt center-based CCDF child care providers.

- b) License-exempt family child care CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used. Not applicable. All family child care is licensed.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. n/a

- c) License-exempt in-home CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, if relative care is exempt from monitoring, and if differential monitoring is used. EEC is still in the process of developing its monitoring procedures, through its differential licensing system, to annually visit license-exempt in-home CCDF child care providers.

- d) Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. EEC has not yet amended its regulations regarding inspections for license-exempt in-home CCDF child care providers.

5.3.5 Licensing inspectors.

Lead Agencies will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors are qualified to inspect child care providers and facilities and have received health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served. Training shall include, but is not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41(a)(1) and all aspects of the State's licensure requirements (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(I); 98.42(b)(1)).

- a) To certify, describe how the Lead Agency ensures that licensing inspectors are qualified to inspect child care facilities and providers and that those inspectors have received training on health and safety requirements that are appropriate to the age of the children in care and the type of provider setting (98.42(b)(1)). Licensors employed by the Department are trained in the Commonwealth's regulations and policies, spend time observing other licensors before assuming an active caseload, and are supervised continuously to ensure that they are qualified.

- b) Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure. n/a

5.3.6 The States and Territories shall have policies and practices that require the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers and facilities in the state/territory to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the state/territory to conduct effective inspections of child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with federal, state, and local laws (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(III); 98.42(b)(3)).

a) To certify, describe the state/territory policies and practices regarding the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers (i.e., number of providers per number of child care providers) and facilities in the state/territory and include how the ratio is sufficient to conduct effective inspections on a timely basis. EEC does not have a policy or practice regarding the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers/programs.

b) Provide the policy citation and state/territory ratio of licensing inspectors. n/a

5.3.7 States and territories have the option to exempt relatives (defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles (98.42(c)) from inspection requirements. *Note:* This exception only applies if the individual cares *only* for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from the inspection requirements listed in 5.3.3?

Yes, relatives are exempt from all inspection requirements. If the state/territory exempts relatives from all inspection requirements, describe how the state ensures the health and safety of children in relative care. Relatives will be required to attend some trainings prior to receiving CCDF funding to ensure that they are aware of basic health and safety requirements as they relate to children in their care.

Yes, relatives are exempt from some inspection requirements. If the state/territory exempts relatives from the inspection requirements, describe which inspection requirements do not apply to relative providers (including which relatives may be exempt) and how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

No, relatives are not exempt from inspection requirements.

5.4 Criminal Background Checks

5.4.1 In recognition of the significant challenges to implementing the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) background check requirements, all States applied for and received extensions through September 30, 2018. The Office of Child Care (OCC)/Administration for Children and Families (ACF)/U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is committed to granting additional waivers of up to 2 years, in one year increments (i.e., potentially through September 30, 2020) if significant milestones for background check requirements are met. In order to receive these time-limited waivers, states and territories will demonstrate that the milestones are met and apply for the time-limited waiver by responding to questions 5.4.1a through 5.4.1h below.

As a reminder, the CCDBG Act requires States and territories to have in effect requirements, policies and procedures to conduct criminal background checks for all child care staff members (including prospective staff members) of all child care providers that are 1) licensed, regulated, or registered under state/territory law; or, 2) all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers). Background check requirements apply to any staff member who is employed by a child care provider for compensation, including contract employees and self-employed individuals; whose activities involve the care or supervision of children; or who has unsupervised access to children. For FCC homes, this requirement includes

the caregiver and any other adults residing in the family child care home who are age 18 or older. This requirement does not apply to individuals who are related to all children for whom child care services are provided.

A criminal background check must include 8 specific components, which encompass 3 in-state checks, 2 national checks, and 3 inter-state checks:

1. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency (in-state);
2. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency (in-state);
3. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency (in-state);
4. FBI fingerprint check (national);
5. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) (national);
6. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional (inter-state);
7. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years (inter-state); and
8. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years (inter-state).

Milestone Prerequisites for Time-Limited Waivers

By September 30, 2018, states and territories must have requirements, policies and procedures for four specific background check components, and must be conducting those checks for all new (prospective) child care staff, in accordance with 45 CFR 98.43 and 98.16(o):

- The national FBI fingerprint check; and,
- The three in-state background check provisions for the current state of residency:
 - state criminal registry or repository using fingerprints;
 - state sex offender registry or repository check;
 - state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database .

All four components are required in order for the milestone to be considered met.

If the milestone prerequisites are met, then time-limited waivers may be requested for the components as outlined in the table below.

Background Check Components	If milestone is met, time-limited waiver allowed for:
1) In-state criminal w/fingerprints	Conducting background checks on backlog of current (existing) staff only
2) In-state sex offender registry	

3) In-state state-based child abuse and neglect registry	
4) FBI fingerprint check	
5) NCIC National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)	Establishing requirements and procedures AND/OR
6) Inter-state state criminal registry	Conducting background checks on all new (prospective) child care staff
7) Inter-state state sex offender registry	AND/OR
8) Inter-state child abuse and neglect registry	Conducting background checks on backlog of current (existing) staff

States and Territories will apply for the initial waiver for a one-year period (starting October 1, 2018 and ending September 30, 2019) as part of the submission of this Plan. If approved, States and Territories will have the option to *renew* these waivers for one additional year as long as progress is demonstrated during the initial waiver period. Additional guidance will be issued later on the timeline and criteria for requesting the waiver renewal.

Overview of Background Check Implementation deadlines

- Original deadline for implementation (658H(j)(1) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2017
- Initial one-year extension deadline (658H(j)(2) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2018
- One-year waiver deadline (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(i)): September 30, 2019
- Waiver renewal deadline (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(ii)): September 30, 2020

Use questions 5.4.1a through 5.4.1d below to describe achievement of the milestone components, use questions 5.4.1e through 5.4.1h to provide the status for the remaining checks, and as applicable, use questions 5.4.1a through 5.4.1h to request a time-limited waiver for any allowable background check requirement.

- a) Briefly summarize the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints required in the state where the staff member resides. ■ Early Education and Care (EEC) completes a Massachusetts criminal record check for applicants. This criminal record check contains only Massachusetts information and is not fingerprint supported. The name-based criminal record check (CORI) completed returns information on available Massachusetts arraignments. The information is then searched against Massachusetts court records to determine if there is a possible record. The information contained in the CORI includes all adult/youthful offender and juvenile offender convictions, non-convictions, and pending offenses as well as sealed case. We rely on the Federal Bureau of Investigations for the fingerprint check as Massachusetts criminal history is name and date of birth based rather than fingerprint supported. ■

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). Existing background record check (BRC) regulations require all candidates, including licensees, household members (age 15 and over), individuals regularly on the premises of FCC (age 15 and over), teachers, transportation drivers/monitors and any other individuals with the potential for unsupervised contact with children to complete a BRC. EEC will further require that if the candidate works in a child care program the requirements will apply regardless of unsupervised access
- ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). EEC is transitioning to apply the requirements to all the groups listed above in addition to all CCDF funded programs eligible to receive a subsidy regardless of whether such entities actually receive a subsidy
- iii. Has the search of the state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints, been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?
 - Yes.
 - No. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. September 30, 2020 Describe the status of conducting the search of the state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints for current (existing) child care staff. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: EEC currently requires all applicants to complete a CORI – which is a name based criminal history check but it is not supported by fingerprints and contains only Massachusetts information. As part of the BRC process applicants are also required to complete a fingerprint based check. The fingerprint based check will include all arrests on file with the FBI. At this time EEC is developing a manual process for applicants working in Massachusetts but residing in any other state. This requirement is a challenge. EEC has reached out to Office Child Care (OCC)/Admin Children Families (ACF) for further guidance. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly. EEC is still pending guidance on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested and would align with the inter-state requirement challenges. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020
- iv. List the citation: 606 CMR 14.00 et seq.

- b) Briefly summarize the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state sex offender registry or repository in the state where the staff member resides. Current BRC regulations require Massachusetts In-State Sexual Offender Registry Information (SORI) checks for individuals classified as either Level 2 or Level 3 Sex Offenders. A legislative bill has been filed to open up access to Level 1 information. For applicants residing outside of Massachusetts EEC has created a manual process which may require the candidate to obtain the information and provide it to EEC.
- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). Existing BRC regulations require all candidates, including licensees, household members (age 15 and over), individuals regularly on the premises of FCC (age 15 and over), teachers, transportation drivers/monitors and any other individuals with the potential for unsupervised contact with children to complete a BRC which includes a SORI check. EEC will further require that if the candidate works in a child care program the requirements will apply regardless of unsupervised access.
 - ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). EEC is transitioning to apply the requirements to all the groups listed above in addition to all CCDF funded programs eligible to receive a subsidy regardless of whether such entities actually receive a subsidy.
 - iii. Has the search of the state sex offender registry or repository been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?
 - Yes
 - No. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. **September 30, 2020** Describe the status of conducting the search of the state sex offender registry or repository for current (existing) child care staff. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: EEC currently requires all applicants to complete a SORI – which is a name based check of Massachusetts Level 2 and Level 3 sex offender information. At this time EEC is developing a manual process for applicants working in Massachusetts but residing in another state. This requirement is a challenge. EEC has reached out to Office Child Care/Admin Children Families for further guidance. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly. EEC is still pending guidance

on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested and would align with the inter-state requirement challenges. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020.

- iv. List the citation: 606 CMR 14.00 et seq.
- c) Briefly summarize the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database in the state where the staff member resides. Current BRC regulations require a check of Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) databases including its Central Registry and Registry of Alleged Perpetrators to determine if a candidate has been identified as the person responsible for abuse or neglect of a child in a supported G.L. c.119, §51B Report or is the alleged perpetrator of a pending investigation for abuse or neglect under G.L. c.119, §51A.
 - i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). Existing BRC regulations require all candidates, including licensees, household members (age 15 and over), individuals regularly on the premises of FCC (age 15 and over), teachers, transportation drivers/monitors and any other individuals with the potential for unsupervised contact with children to complete a BRC which includes a DCF check. EEC will further require that if the candidate works in a child care program the requirements will apply regardless of unsupervised access.
 - ii. Describe how these requirements apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). EEC is transitioning to apply the requirements to all the groups listed above in addition to all CCDF funded programs eligible to receive a subsidy regardless of whether such entities actually receive a subsidy.
 - iii. Has the search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?
 - Yes
 - No. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. September 30, 2020 Describe the status of conducting the search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database for current (existing) child care staff. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: EEC currently requires all applicants to complete a Massachusetts child welfare check – which is a name based check to determine if a candidate has been identified as the person responsible for abuse or neglect of a child in a supported G.L. c.119, §51B Report or is the alleged perpetrator of a pending

investigation for abuse or neglect under G.L. c.119, §51A. At this time EEC is developing a manual process for applicants working in Massachusetts but residing in another state. This requirement is a challenge. EEC has reached out to OCC/ACF for further guidance. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly. EEC is still pending guidance on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested and would align with the interstate requirement challenges. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020.

- iv. List the citation: 606 CMR 14.00 et seq.
- d) Briefly summarize the requirements, policies and procedures for the FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification. Current EEC BRC regulations include FBI State and National Fingerprint based Criminal Offender Record Information checks using Next Generation Identification. The information relayed may include but not be limited to arrests regardless of arraignment status both in Massachusetts and out-of-state, adult and juvenile convictions, non-convictions and pending offenses in both Massachusetts and out-of-state, federal and international arrests/charges, including but not limited to deportation and immigration proceedings.
- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). Existing BRC regulations require all candidates, including licensees, household members (age 15 and over), individuals regularly on the premises of FCC (age 15 and over), teachers, transportation drivers/monitors and any other individuals with the potential for unsupervised contact with children to complete a BRC which includes a fingerprint based check. EEC will further require that if the candidate works in a child care program the requirements will apply regardless of unsupervised access.
 - ii. Describe how these requirements apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). EEC is transitioning to apply the requirements to all the groups listed above in addition to all CCDF funded programs eligible to receive a subsidy regardless of whether such entities actually receive a subsidy.
 - iii. Has the search of the FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?
 - Yes
 - No. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. September 30, 2020. Describe the status of conducting the FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification for current (existing) child care staff. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-

exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: EEC currently requires all applicants to complete a fingerprint based check. The challenge is the current system is not built to enforce the requirement. EEC is developing a new application and changing the order of checks in which the candidate will be notified to be fingerprinted at the beginning of the BRC process. This will assist with the compliance of this requirement. The application will also track those candidates that have not been fingerprinted and failure to comply will result in being ineligible to work in a child care program.

iv. List the citation: 606 CMR 14.00 et seq

e) Describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry.

Fully implemented for all prospective and existing required child care providers (all licensed, regulated or registered; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)). This means that the State/Territory has requirements and procedures in effect, and has conducted the search of the NCIC's NSOR check on all new and existing child care staff.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o).
- ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o).
- iii. List the citation:

In progress. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. **September 30, 2018** Describe the status of implementation of requirements, policies and procedures for the NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all prospective and existing licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: EEC is in the process of meeting the requirements of the NCIC National Sex Offender Registry check. EEC is partnered with the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services who will provide a broker to receive the information. It is expected this requirement will be met by September 2018 and there are no challenges at this time.

f) Describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the criminal registries or repositories in other states where the child care staff member resided during the preceding 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional in those other states.

Fully implemented for all prospective and existing required child care providers (all licensed, regulated or registered; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)). This means that the State/Territory has requirements and procedures in effect, and has conducted the inter-state state criminal registry check on all new and existing child care staff.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- iii. List the citation: [REDACTED]

In progress. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. September 30, 2020 Describe the status of implementation of requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the criminal registries or repositories in other states where the child care staff member resided during the preceding 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional in those other states. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all (prospective and existing) licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all providers eligible to provide care for children receiving CCDF; 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: [REDACTED] At this time EEC is developing a manual process for search of the criminal registries or repositories in other states where the child care staff member resided during the preceding 5 years. EEC has gathered information for each state agency responsible for providing this information. This requirement is a challenge. EEC has reached out to OCC/ACF for further guidance. EEC has inquired receiving access to NLETS for the information however there has not been clear decision of when states will have access. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly and EEC may be able to obtain the information on its own. EEC is still pending guidance on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020.

g) Describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state sex offender registry or repository in each state where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years.

Fully implemented for all required child care providers (all licensed, regulated or registered; and all (prospective and existing) child care providers eligible to provide care for children receiving CCDF assistance). This means that the State/Territory has requirements and procedures in effect, and has conducted the inter-state state sex offender registry check on all new and existing child care staff.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all providers eligible to care for children receiving CCDF, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- iii. List the citation: [REDACTED]

In progress. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. **September 30, 2020** Describe the status of implementation of requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state sex offender registry or repository in each state where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all (prospective and existing) licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all providers eligible to provide care for children receiving CCDF; 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: [REDACTED] At this time EEC is developing a manual process for search of the state sex offender registry or repository in each state where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. EEC has gathered information for each state agency responsible for providing this information. This requirement is a challenge. There is no centralized database that obtains each state's information. EEC has reached out to OCC/ACF for further guidance. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly and EEC may be able to obtain the information on its own. EEC is still pending guidance on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020.

h) Describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database in each State where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years.

Fully implemented for all prospective and existing required child care providers (all licensed, regulated or registered; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)). This means that the State/Territory has requirements and procedures in effect, and has conducted the state-based child abuse and neglect registry check on all new and existing child care staff.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o). [REDACTED]
- iii. List the citation: [REDACTED]

In progress. Check here to indicate request for time-limited waiver for this requirement and enter the expected date of full implementation of this requirement. **September 30, 2020** Describe the status of implementation of requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database in each State where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. At a minimum, the description should briefly summarize: 1) efforts to date to implement the requirement for all (prospective and existing) licensed, regulated and registered providers; and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers); 2) key activities planned toward implementation of this requirement; 3) key challenges to implementing this requirement; and 4) strategies used to address challenges: [REDACTED] At this time EEC is developing a manual process for search of the state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database in each State where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. EEC has gathered information for each state agency responsible for providing this information. This requirement is a challenge. There is no centralized database that obtains each state's information and some states may not be willing to provide the information to EEC. EEC has reached out to OCC/ACF for further guidance. In the meantime a manual process has been created in which the candidate will be required to provide the information to EEC directly and EEC may be able to obtain the information on its own. EEC is still pending guidance on how to comply with this requirement. A time limited waiver is requested. EEC would hope to be in compliance by September 2020.

5.4.2 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, prior to the date an individual becomes a child care staff member and at least once every 5 years thereafter. A prospective child care staff member may begin to work on a provisional basis for a child care provider after completing either a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check or a search of the state/territory criminal registry or repository using fingerprints (in the state/territory where the staff member resides. However, the child care staff member must be supervised at all times pending completion of all the background check components (98.43(d)(4)).

5.4.3 Does the state/territory allow prospective staff members to begin work on a provisional basis (if supervised at all times) after completing the FBI fingerprint check or a fingerprint check of the state criminal registry or repository in the state where the child care staff member resides?

No.

Yes. Describe: [REDACTED] EEC has submitted a legislative bill that will allow for a provisional status after the fingerprint check and applicable sex offender checks have been approved the candidate will

be allowed to work in a supervised capacity. EEC current BRC regulations and legislation allow for a candidate to work in an unsupervised capacity with the approval of the Massachusetts criminal history, child welfare and sex offender search prior to the fingerprint check being completed.

- 5.4.4 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.
- 5.4.5 Describe the requirements, policies, and procedures in place to respond as expeditiously as possible to other states', territories', and tribes' requests for background check results to accommodate the 45-day timeframe, including any agencies/entities responsible for responding to requests from other states (98.43(a)(1)(iii)). We have alerted other state agencies within Massachusetts including, EOPSS, DCJIS, and DCF, of the CCDBG requirements so they are responsive to other states. We plan to work with them to address our internal requirements and to find a manageable system for responding to inquiries from out of state.
- 5.4.6 Child care staff members cannot be employed by a child care provider receiving CCDF subsidy funds if they refuse a background check, make materially false statements in connection with the background check, or are registered or required to be registered on the state or National Sex Offender Registry. Potential staff members also cannot be employed by a provider receiving CCDF funds if they have been convicted of: a felony consisting of murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crimes involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, or—subject to an individual review (at the state/territory's option)—a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes—child abuse, child endangerment, or sexual assault; or a misdemeanor involving child pornography (98.43(c)(1)).

Note: The Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. It may release aggregated data by crime as long as the data do not include personally identifiable information (98.43(e)(2)(iii)).

- 5.4.7 Does the state/territory disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for other crimes not specifically listed in 98.43(h)?
- No.
 - Yes. Describe: EEC will maintain the list provided by CCDBG of mandatory disqualifiers. All other offenses will be screened by EEC and follow a review process outlined in the BRC regulations, in which EEC will determine the final suitability determination of the candidates.

- 5.4.8 The state/territory has a process for a child care staff member to appeal the results of his or her background check to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the criminal background report, as detailed in 98.43(e)(3). Describe how the Lead Agency ensures the privacy of background checks and provides opportunities for applicants to appeal the results of background checks. In addition, describe whether the state/territory has a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment (98.43(e)(2–4)). **EEC** Moving forward, EEC will be utilizing the mandatory disqualifiers set out by CCDBG. There is no appeal process other than correcting a record for mandatory disqualifiers. EEC provides the instructions to dispute any and all records provided to the applicant from EEC for accuracy. The review process for individuals disqualified due to felony drug offenses as well as all other non mandatory offenses is outlined in EEC's BRC regulations at 606 CMR 14.00 et seq. The BRC regulations designate crimes either as presumptive offenses or discretionary offenses. If an applicant has a conviction for a crime categorized as a presumptive offense, then the applicant may be asked to provide EEC with a letter from a criminal justice official or a mental health professional explaining why the person does not pose a risk of harm to children. The applicant may submit a request for discretionary approval. The discretionary approval process allows an applicant the opportunity to submit documentation and an explanation to support their claim that there is clear and convincing evidence that his/her criminal history does not pose a risk of harm to children.
- 5.4.9 The State/Territory may not charge fees that exceed the actual costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check (98.43(f)). Describe how the state/territory ensures that fees charged for completing the background checks do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration, regardless of whether they are conducted by the state/territory or a third-party vendor or contractor. Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable (98.43(f)). **EEC** EEC does not charge applicants any fees for conducting CORI, DCF, NSOR or SORI checks. However, Massachusetts law requires that a fee be assessed for completing fingerprint checks. Specifically, the law states that the fee for processing the state and national fingerprint checks will be used to finance the costs of operating and administering the checks, and that the maximum fee is \$35. EEC plans to work with our state partners to determine whether the additional checks will require us to charge applicants for processing BRCs, and if so, how we can implement such charges in a manner that causes the least financial hardship on applicants as possible.
- 5.4.10 Federal requirements do not address background check requirements for relative providers who receive CCDF; therefore, States have the flexibility to decide which background check requirements relatives, as defined by CCDF, must meet. *Note:* This exception only applies if the individual cares *only* for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from background checks?
- No, relatives are not exempt from background check requirements.
- Yes, relatives are exempt from *all* background check requirements.

Yes, relatives are exempt from *some* background check requirements. If the state/territory exempts relatives from some background check requirements, describe which background check requirements do not apply to relative providers. Currently, EEC requires that relative caregivers, or individuals who are reimbursed by the state for caring for one related subsidized child in either the child's or the caregiver's own home, receive a SORI and NSOR check. This population is exempt from CORI, DCF, and fingerprint checks. If the relative caregiver is licensed by EEC as a family child care provider, then that person is no longer exempt from any of EEC's BRC checks.

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

This section covers the state or territory framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education (98.44(a)); provides a description of strategies used to strengthen the business practices of child care providers (98.16(z)); and addresses early learning and developmental guidelines.

States and territories are required to describe their framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education for caregivers, teachers, and directors, including those working in school-age care (98.44(a)). States and territories must incorporate their knowledge and application of health and safety standards, early learning guidelines, responses to challenging behavior, and the engagement of families. States and territories are required to establish a progression of professional development opportunities to improve the knowledge and skills of CCDF providers (658E(c)(2)(G)). To the extent practicable, professional development should be appropriate to work with a population of children of different ages, English-language learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans (98.44(b)(2)(iv)). Training and professional development is one of the options that states and territories have for investing their CCDF quality funds (658G(b)(1)).

6.1 Professional Development Framework

6.1.1 Describe how the state/territory developed its training and professional development Each State or Territory must describe their professional development framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education, which is developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. The framework should include these components: (1) professional standards and competencies, (2) career pathways, (3) advisory structures, (4) articulation, (5) workforce information, and (6) financing (98.44(a)(3)). Flexibility is provided on the strategies, breadth, and depth with which states and territories will develop and implement their framework. Describe how the state/territory's framework for training and professional development addresses the following required elements:

- State/territory professional standards and competencies. Describe: Massachusetts takes a comprehensive view of the critical importance of developmentally appropriate experiences to children from birth. To that end, there are multiple standards and competencies designed for educators and program administrators in planning and evaluating curricula. They include the following: - Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers - Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences - The

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Pre-Kindergarten to 12 - Kindergarten Learning Experiences - Pre-School and Kindergarten Standards in the Domains of Social-Emotional Development and Approaches to Play and Learning - Pre-K Science, Technology and Engineering Standards - Early English Language Development Standards (E-ELD).

- Career pathways. Describe: A basic career ladder has been developed and endorsed by the Commonwealth's Board of Early Education and Care which is currently used by center-based educators. Massachusetts is in the process of designing a robust career lattice that will include educators and administrators in all program types. This career lattice will form the center of a new credentialing system in the state has also developed a career lattice for English Language Learners.
- Advisory structure. Describe: EEC is governed by the Board of Early Education and Care, which has ten members appointed by the Governor. The Secretaries of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office of Education are members of the Board. EEC also has a state advisory council on early education and care, the members of which represent a reasonable geographic balance and reflect the diversity of the commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. All appointees have a special expertise or interest in high quality early childhood education and care and represent a mix of representatives of the early childhood community, the civic, labor, and business communities, academics, parents, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers. The advisory council reviews and offer comments on any rules or regulations before promulgation by the board, and makes recommendations to the board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services, including professional development. The advisory also has expertise groups in order to maximize focused, relevant and indepth conversations with multiple stakeholder types. The following six expertise groups meet: 1. Agencies with Vendor/Contract Relationship; 2. Legislators; 3. Business/Civic; 4. Higher Education; 5. State Associations; and 6. K-12 Linkages.
- Articulation. Describe: EEC worked with the MA Department of Higher Education (DHE) to revise the Early Childhood Education Transfer Compact. The Compact allows graduates of a state community college to begin a bachelor's degree in early education or Pre K-12 teacher licensure as a junior at a state university. EEC has further supported this work at a local level by convening 2- and 4-year college representatives through the MA Readiness Center network and EPS grantees in efforts to streamline academic advising and support transfer students. DHE is convening public 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education to further build and align coursework for articulation and transfer for early education degree programs. Articulation agreements are in place to facilitate transfer of the newly developed Post-Master's certificate into a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) or Doctoral program at select Massachusetts' colleges.

- **Workforce information.** Describe: Educators working in EEC-licensed programs serving children from birth through school age, regardless of setting, must create an individual educator profile in EEC's Professional Qualifications Registry (PQR) and update it annually. EEC requires educators who work in programs that are not subject to EEC licensure, including those who work in public preschools, to register if they would like to participate in trainings funded by EEC or are in programs participating in EEC's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). EEC's PQR gathers important information on the size, composition, education, and experience of our current workforce. It stores information about the retention and turnover of educators working in early education and out-of-school time programs. This information that is collected from the PQR will help EEC respond to the needs of all early educators and programs in Massachusetts.
- **Financing.** Describe: The Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship Program was established in 2005 to support increases in quality early education and out of school time settings. The ECE Scholarship program provides financial assistance to early education and care out-of-school time providers working in EEC-licensed or licensed-exempt programs who are also pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degrees in early childhood education or a related field at an approved Massachusetts college or university. The ECE Scholarship is available annually and is a joint initiative with EEC and the MA Department of Higher Education Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

The following phrases are optional elements, or elements that should be implemented to the extent practicable, in the training and professional development framework.

Continuing education unit trainings and credit-bearing professional development to the extent practicable. Describe: EEC requires that all training have either CEUs, CECs, or college credits associated with it to meet QRIS requirements. All professional development supported by EEC through initiatives, such as the Educator and Provider Support grant, must award a minimum of 0.5 CEUs or 1 college credit to ensure high quality training. In addition, CEUs may be used to substitute for some of the required coursework to meet EEC Certification for Lead Teacher or Director I or II. Therefore, EEC requires all of its grantees (EPS, the Statewide Assessment and the QRIS Measurement Tools Grantee) to adhere to these requirements.

Engagement of training and professional development providers, including higher education, in aligning training and educational opportunities with the state/territory's framework.

Describe: EEC's current educator certification system requires a series of credit-bearing or CEU coursework in order to qualify. Training and professional development providers, including higher education, align their offerings so that educators can access the needed training to meet the certification requirements.

Other. Describe: EEC training to meet licensing and regulatory requirements are offered through several systems. EEC has established a statewide Educator and Provider Support (EPS) network to provide state-funded professional development opportunities to the early education and out of school time workforce within each Region of the Commonwealth. The EPS grant serves educators working in EEC's mixed delivery system including those working in family child

care homes, center-based programs, and those that are exempt from licensing. Training delivered through the EPS network must be for CEU or college credit.

- 6.1.2 Describe how the state/territory developed its training and professional development requirements in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (if applicable) or with another state or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC that addresses the professional development, training, and education of child care providers and staff. The advisory council reviews and makes recommendations to the EEC Board that it considers appropriate for changes and improvements in early education and care programs and services, including professional development. All training and professional development mandated by EEC-licensing regulations requires input and approval by the Board. Any changes in the professional development system or delivery requires input from the advisory council and the Board and its Workforce Adhoc Committee. The Workforce Committee of the Board of Early Education and Care also plays a significant role in reviewing and providing guidance to EEC staff on all workforce development and QRIS-related issues.
- 6.1.3 Identify how the framework improves the quality, diversity, stability, and retention of caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.44(a)(7)). Check and describe all that apply.
- Financial assistance to attain credentials and post-secondary degrees. Describe: The Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship Program was established in 2005 to support increases in quality early education and out of school time settings. The ECE Scholarship program provides financial assistance to early education and care out-of-school time providers working in EEC-licensed or licensed-exempt programs who are also pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degrees in early childhood education or a related field at an approved Massachusetts college or university. The ECE Scholarship is available annually and is a joint initiative with EEC and the MA Department of Higher Education Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).
 - Financial incentives linked to educational attainment and retention. Describe: _____
 - Financial incentives and compensation improvements. Describe: An important focus of EEC's Framework is in making progress towards increased compensation through rate increases, incentives for educator and program improvement and increasing the access of benefits associated with the Universal Pre-K grant. To that end, programs participating in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) serving infants and toddlers receive a rate increase as a reward for moving to QRIS level 2 to acknowledge the additional educational requirements at that level. Programs participating in the statefunded Universal Pre-K Program (UPK) also receive additional funds that may be used for stipends to acknowledge the additional educational requirements of moving to QRIS-level 3, which is a UPK requirement.
 - Registered apprenticeship programs. Describe: _____
 - Outreach to high school (including career and technical) students. Describe: EEC has an ongoing relationship with the high schools that maintain vocational early education and care programs. This includes ongoing visits and technical assistance to those programs. Additionally, EEC's Professional Qualifications Unit works with the state's career and technical high schools and students to assist students in achieving EEC educator certification levels upon graduation.

Policies for paid sick leave. Describe: Beginning in 2015, EEC began providing earned sick time to family child care providers who receive subsidized payments from EEC for providing child care to eligible families. Each FCC provider participating in the early education and care subsidy program is entitled to receive up to four days of earned sick time per year. Sick time may be used based on illness of the provider or a family member, or to address issues related to domestic violence. _____

Policies for paid annual leave. Describe: At Level 3 of the Massachusetts QRIS, early education and care programs must offer staff at least one benefit program, such as annual paid leave, health care, or retirement.

Policies for health care benefits. Describe: At Level 3 of the Massachusetts QRIS, early education and care programs must offer staff at least one benefit program, such as annual paid leave, health care, or retirement.

Policies for retirement benefits. Describe: At Level 3 of the Massachusetts QRIS, early education and care programs must offer staff at least one benefit program, such as annual paid leave, health care, or retirement.

Support for providers' mental health, such as training in reflective practices and stress-reduction techniques and health and mental health consultation services. Describe: _____

Other. Describe: _____

6.2 Training and Professional Development Requirements

The state/territory must develop training and professional development requirements, including pre-service or orientation training (to be completed within 3 months) and ongoing 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 funds across the entire age span, from birth through age 12 (658E(c)(2)(G)). Ongoing training and professional development should be accessible and appropriate to the setting and age of the children served (98.44(b)(2)).

6.2.1 Describe how the state/territory incorporates the knowledge and application of its early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable); its health and safety standards (as described in section 5); and social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models, which can include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in section 2) in the training and professional development requirements (98.44(b)(2)(ii)). Professional Development Grantees are required to provide credit-bearing (CEU or college credit) professional development on the Early Learning Guidelines. Grantees are also required to align professional development opportunities to the appropriate guidelines. Support for implementation includes coaching and technical assistance. In addition, training, coaching, and technical assistance is provided on the Center for Social-Emotional Foundation of Early Learning (CSEFEL) model, which is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5

6.2.2 Describe how the state/territory's training and professional development requirements are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF

funds (as applicable) (98.44(b)(2)(vi)). EEC provides training for all educators in Massachusetts through a mixed delivery system which includes group and center based programs, out of school time programs, family child care homes, public preschool programs, private preschool programs, kindergarten, and Head Start programs. This would include those educators in tribal organizations.

- 6.2.3 Describe how the state/territory will recruit and facilitate the participation of providers with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities (98.16(dd)). Massachusetts has a diverse population of families, including those for whom English is not their first language. EEC strives to recruit providers that can match families' diverse needs and reflect their language and culture. This is done through ensuring materials are translated into multiple languages, providing training and coaching in educators' native languages and ensuring that Grantees such as the Community and Family Engagement (CFCE) Grantees, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Grantees and Family Child Care (FCC) Systems have staff that reflect the language and culture of the families they serve.
- 6.2.4 If the Lead Agency provides information or services to providers in other non-English languages, please identify the three primary languages offered or specify that the State has the ability to have translation/interpretation in primary and secondary languages. Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese are primary languages. Subject to appropriate, Massachusetts has dedicated for the translation of documents into these primary languages as well as other common languages in the Commonwealth, including Arabic, French, Khmer, Nepali, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese. In addition, through the work of the Department's "Initiative to Support Young Dual Language Learners," a series of state family focus groups were conducted in partnerships with multiple stakeholders including the Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees. This series was offered as a way to communicate with families of young dual language learners about the importance of their role in supporting their children's language development and school readiness. In addition, families learned about EEC's newly adopted Early English Language Development Standards to support dual language learners. In support of this effort, a series of family brochures and resources were translated in six different languages including: Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Portuguese, Creole, and Chinese. Finally, through the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, EEC, in partnership with the Boston Children's Museum, created resources for educators and families around four core areas, STEM, Brain Building, School Readiness and Literacy, translated into many languages.
<http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/learning-resources/race-to-the-top>
- 6.2.5 Describe how the state/territory's training and professional development requirements are appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers who care 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 developmental delays and disabilities; and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians (98.44(b)(2)(iii-iv)). As part of its contracts and grants related to professional development and other workforce initiatives, EEC requires all vendors to take into

account the unique needs and diversity of the children and families for the each service delivery area awarded as part of the procurement process. Grantees are required to offer professional development opportunities and support services for educators seeking EEC certifications or ECE credentials for Infants and Toddlers, Pre-School Age Children, and/or School-Age populations. Coursework and coaching must be provided to ensure educators have the knowledge and skills to work with children from diverse languages and cultures, including Native Americans, and second language acquisition. EEC also works with Early Intervention and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that educators have access to training and support on working with children with disabilities

- 6.2.6 The Lead Agency must provide training and technical assistance to providers and appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving homeless children and families (658E(c)(3)(B)(i)).
- a) Describe the state/territory’s training and TA efforts for providers in identifying and serving homeless children and their families (relates to question 3.2.2). The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley are partnering with Horizons for Homeless Children to support the healthy development and learning of young children in homeless shelters. This effort is part of the state's Brain Building in Progress campaign, which promotes the importance of enriching environments in fostering healthy brain development in children, and the critical role that the public plays in providing positive experiences that support children's learning.
 - b) Describe the state/territory’s training and TA efforts for Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff in identifying and serving homeless children and their families (connects to question 3.2.2). The Department of Early Education and Care and United Way jointly lead the Brain Building in Progress campaign. Through this new partnership, EEC and United Way are providing training and education on child development to Horizons for Homeless Children's Playspace Activity Leaders (PALs) and homeless shelter liaisons. Horizons for Homeless Children's Playspaces are located in homeless shelters across the state and provide settings where children and adults can engage in fun and enriching activities that support the children's growth, healthy brain development, and learning. Horizons for Homeless Children's adult volunteer activity leaders provide enriching experiences for the children in the homeless shelter play spaces.
- 6.2.7 The states and territories are required to describe effective internal controls that are in place to ensure program integrity and accountability (98.68(a)). Describe how the state/territory ensures that all providers for children receiving CCDF funds are informed and trained regarding CCDF requirements and integrity (98.68(a)(3)). Check all that apply.
- Issue policy change notices
 - Issue new policy manual
 - Staff training
 - Orientations
 - Onsite training
 - Online training
 - Regular check-ins to monitor the implementation of CCDF policies

- The type of check-ins, including the frequency. Describe: Regular licensing visits.
- Other. Describe: EEC's Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grant is the primary vehicle for providing state-funded professional development opportunities to educators working in EEC's mixed delivery system. Since the inception of the EPS grants in 2011, grantees have been required to evaluate all services provided through the grant including continuing education and college courses, as well as technical assistance (coaching and mentoring). Grantees are also required to conduct an annual needs assessment to identify professional development needs and improvements for future opportunities and services. Grantees report on the services provided through the grant on a quarterly basis. At the individual grantee level there is constant evaluation of services provided through partnership meetings, individual meetings with educators and programs, and professional learning communities. Evaluation of professional development opportunities has also evolved with follow-up coaching and mentoring or technical assistance paired with specific course offerings or through specific "program focused" models through the grant. In a "program focused" model an EPS funded coach will work with an EEC licensed or license exempt program on the programs needs and staff needs, mostly as it related to upward movement on the MA Quality Rating and Improvement System or national accreditation. Through this model there is a dedicated coach working with the program and program staff supporting theory to practice and the implementation of knowledge learned through coursework.

6.2.8 Lead Agencies must develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply and to improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (z)). Describe the state/territory's strategies to strengthen provider's business practices, which can include training and/or TA efforts.

- a) Identify the strategies that the state/territory is developing and implementing for training and TA. EEC's Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grant is the primary vehicle for providing state-funded professional development opportunities to educators working in EEC's mixed delivery system. Training offered includes a mix. EEC currently contracts with Child Development and Education, Inc. to provide training and technical assistance on various QRIS aligned measurement tools including the Program Administration Scale and the Business Administration Scale. These tools help educators to identify best business practices and to implement policies and procedures to improve those practices.
- b) Check the topics addressed in the state/territory's strategies. Check all that apply.
 - Fiscal management
 - Budgeting
 - Recordkeeping
 - Hiring, developing, and retaining qualified staff
 - Risk management
 - Community relationships
 - Marketing and public relations

Parent-provider communications, including who delivers the training, education, and/or technical assistance

Other. Describe: _____

6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

6.3.1 States and territories are required to 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, birth-to-five), describing what children should know and be able to do and covering the essential domains of early childhood development. These early learning and developmental guidelines are to be used statewide and territory-wide by child care providers and in the development and implementation of training and professional development (658E(c)(2)(T)). The required essential domains for these guidelines are cognition, including language arts and mathematics; social, emotional, and physical development; and approaches toward learning (98.15(a)(9)). At the option of the state/territory, early learning and developmental guidelines for out-of-school time may be developed. *Note:* States and territories may use the quality set-aside, discussed in section 7, to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines.

a) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are research-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and aligned with kindergarten entry. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks include learning standards for preschool –grade 12. These Frameworks are based on research and effective practice, and enable teachers and administrators to strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment. They present an aligned progression of development from preschool to kindergarten. The companion document *Guidelines to Preschool and Kindergarten Learning Experiences* (draft document) describes developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically appropriate practices to implement the Frameworks.

b) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are appropriate for all children from birth to kindergarten entry. The state's Curriculum Frameworks provide learning standards for preschool through Grade 12. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) has also developed infant and toddler guidelines

c) Check the domain areas included in the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines. Check all that apply.

Cognition, including language arts and mathematics

Social development

Emotional development

Physical development

Approaches toward learning

Other. Describe: Social Studies, Science and Technology/Engineering, Arts

d) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are implemented in consultation with the educational agency and the State Advisory Council or

other state or state-designated cross-agency body if there is no SAC. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the Curriculum Frameworks with feedback and input from the Department of Early Education. The Board for the Department of Early Education and Care approves the infant and toddler learning guidelines. Public districts and schools are required to adhere to the Curriculum Frameworks. Early childhood programs serving preschool-age children and receiving certain funding from EEC are expected to implement the Frameworks

- e) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are updated and include the date first issued and/or the frequency of updates. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks were first approved in 1997 and revised in 2010. Three of the Frameworks were revised in 2017. The Frameworks are updated to incorporate improvements suggested by Massachusetts educators, including higher education faculty
- f) Provide the Web link to the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>

6.3.2 CCDF funds cannot be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that:

- Will be the primary or sole basis to determine a child care provider ineligible to participate in the CCDF,
- Will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider,
- Will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness,
- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF (658E(c)(2)(T)(ii)(I); 98.15(a)(2)).

Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are used. The guidelines are used by higher education faculty in their training and coursework with educators. They are also used by licensors in their work with programs and educators as a reference to best practices that should occur in the classroom, home or program. Program leaders use the guidelines as part of their staff training and guidance. The guidelines are also used by EEC to inform its thinking on the development of training. When the educator core competencies are revised they will be crosswalked to the early learning and development guidelines to ensure alignment.

6.3.3 If quality funds are used to develop, maintain, or implement early learning guidelines, describe the measureable indicators that will be used to evaluate the state/territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services and the data on the extent to which the state/territory has met these measures (98.53(f)(3)). The state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is the main mechanism by which it evaluates progress in improving the quality of child care programs. The MA QRIS outlines a series of standards that programs must meet to demonstrate achievement of distinct levels of quality. Massachusetts' Program Quality team participation and rating data monthly, and uses this data to identify and address trends.

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to reserve and use a portion of their Child Care and Development Fund program expenditures for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and to increase parental options for and access to high-quality child care (98.53). The quality activities should be aligned with a statewide or territory-wide assessment of the state's or territory's need to carry out such services and care.

States and territories are required to report on these quality improvement investments through CCDF in three ways:

1. In the Plan, states and territories will describe the types of activities supported by quality investments over the 3-year period (658G(b); 98.16(j)).
2. ACF will collect annual data on how much CCDF funding is spent on quality activities using the expenditure report (ACF-696). This report will be used to determine compliance with the required quality and infant and toddler spending requirements (658G(d)(1); 98.53(f)).
3. For each year of the Plan period, states and territories will submit a separate annual Quality Progress Report that will include a description of activities to be funded by quality expenditures and the measures used by the state/territory to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory (658G(d); 98.53(f)).

States and territories must fund efforts in at least one of the following 10 activities:

- Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce
- Improving on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines
- Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services
- Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers
- Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services
- Supporting compliance with state/territory requirements for licensing, inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety (as described in section 5)
- Evaluating the quality of child care programs in the state/territory, including evaluating how programs positively impact children
- Supporting providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation
- Supporting the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development
- Performing 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, quality set-aside funds and will describe the measurable indicators of progress used to evaluate state/territory progress in improving the quality of child care services for each expenditure (98.53(f)).

This section covers the quality activities needs assessment and quality improvement activities and indicators of progress for each of the activities undertaken in the state or territory.

7.1 Quality Activities Needs Assessment for Child Care Services

- 7.1.1 Lead Agencies must invest in quality activities based on an assessment of the state/territory's needs to carry out those activities. Lead Agencies have the flexibility to design an assessment of their quality activities that best meet their needs, including how often they do the assessment. Describe your state/territory assessment process, including the frequency of assessment (658G(a)(1); 98.53(a)). As part of the Race the Top, Massachusetts was required to conduct a validation study of the state's QRIS. The Wellesley Centers for Women of Wellesley College and the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute collaborated with EEC to evaluate the extent to which key components of the MA QRIS differentiate program quality; assess whether MA QRIS Levels are associated with differences in the developmental outcomes of children; and determine whether and how the system can be improved. The validation study was completed in December of 2016. Since that time, MA has been using the data analysis and recommendations from the researchers to drive the current QRIS revision process. As EEC develops and implements the revised MA QRIS 2.0, EEC is examining the role of needs assessment and evaluation. EEC's network of 90 CFCE grantees are required to conduct a community needs assessment in FY18 to ensure that programming and services offered through the CFCE grant align with family and community demographics, address specific needs/gaps identified through the needs assessment process that fall within the purview of the CFCE grant, and leverage existing community resources to strengthen families in their capacity to support optimal development of young children. The results of these needs assessments will be the foundation for community specific programming and services offered through CFCE grantees that reflect the priority of the CFCE grant, to provide families with access to locally available comprehensive services and supports that strengthen families, promote optimal child development and bolster school readiness. In addition, aggregate information from this process will be used to inform future CFCE grant and reporting requirements
- 7.1.2 Describe the findings of the assessment and if any overarching goals for quality improvement were identified. In the EPS grantee network, assessment of educators' needs have resulted in the development of new coursework, collaborations with other grantees or stakeholders, and regional discussions on the best way to support the on-going needs of the early education and out of school time workforce. Assessment results have indicated educators' top barriers to participation in professional development opportunities are time, location, and money. In addition to regional needs assessments, grantees communicate with EEC's licensing offices to discuss identified professional development needs amongst licensed programs. Grantees also evaluate the services provided to gauge educators' satisfaction with grant services. Review of the regional needs assessments, communications with grantees, and feedback from participants and stakeholders has resulted in changes to the grant to further support overall quality through competency development of individual educators and quality supports for programs. Examples of this include the implementation of a statewide holistic approach to support the training and technical assistance needs of early education and out of school time programs, and greater consistency amongst grantees regarding technical assistance. Unique initiatives within each region of the state have also been implemented in response to the needs of the workforce.

7.2 Use of Quality Funds

7.2.1 Check the quality improvement activities in which the state/territory is investing.

Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce

If checked, respond to section 7.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity.

Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Developing, maintaining, or implementing early learning and developmental guidelines. If checked, respond to section 6.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system. If checked, respond to 7.4 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. If checked, respond to 7.5 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Establishing or expanding a statewide system of CCR&R services, as discussed in 1.7. If checked, respond to 7.6 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Facilitating compliance with state/territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety standards (as described in section 5). If checked, respond to 7.7 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the state/territory. If checked, respond to 7.8 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Supporting accreditation. If checked, respond to 7.9 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

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 7.10 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Other activities determined by the state/territory to improve the quality of child care services and which measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry is possible. If checked, respond to 7.11 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

7.3 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce With CCDF Quality Funds

Lead Agencies can invest in the training, professional development, and post-secondary education of the child care workforce as part of a progression of professional development activities, such as those included at 98.44 in addition to the following (98.53(a)(1)).

7.3.1 Describe how the state/territory funds the training and professional development of the child care workforce.

a) Check and describe which content is included in training and professional development activities and describe who or how an entity is funded to address this topic. Check all that apply.

Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those efforts related to nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically based, developmentally appropriate, and age-appropriate strategies. Describe: The Career Pathways grantees will be required to provide training on all of these topics. EEC has recently awarded a grants to fund, training on trauma-informed practices as well as training, coaching and technical assistance on the Pyramid Model, which is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5.

Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models that promote positive social-emotional development and early childhood mental health and that reduce challenging behaviors, including a reduction in expulsions of preschool-age children from birth to age 5 for such behaviors. (See also section 2.5.) Describe: The Career Pathways grantees will be required to provide training on all of these topics. In addition, EEC health advisors provide training and support related to nutrition and physical activity. Massachusetts has a state leadership team comprised of stakeholders from various state and local agencies. The team provides resources and training to support educators and families on promoting positive social-emotional outcomes for children. _____

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: Coordinated Family & Community Engagement Grantees provide training and technical assistance to families to support their children's positive development. In addition, the Grantee for the QRIS Measurement Tools Grant provides training and support on the Strengthening Families Tool and Survey to support family.

Implementing developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction, and evidence-based curricula and designing learning environments that are aligned with state/territory early learning and developmental standards. Describe: The Career Pathways contract will require that all trainings are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the Massachusetts Early Learning and Development Standards.

Providing onsite or accessible comprehensive services for children and developing community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development. Describe: _____

Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement. Describe: The QRIS Measurement Tools grantee provides high quality, innovative and diverse professional development on how to use research-based measurement tools used in the MA-QRIS to evaluate their program, as well as implement program improvement efforts. All grantees are utilizing the new Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) to guide program's effort in ensuring programs are able to identify their strengths and areas of growth to improve program practice. _____

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: EEC also works with the Department of Public Health/Early Intervention and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that educators have access to training and support on working with children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Supporting the positive development of school-age children. Describe: EEC works with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ensuring educators in school-age programs have access to trainings on supporting positive development for school age children.

Other. Describe: _____

b) Check how the state/territory connects child care providers with available federal and state/territory financial aid or other resources to pursue post-secondary 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 post-secondary training, including financial aid and academic counseling

- Statewide or territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e., an online calendar, a listing of opportunities) of relevant post-secondary education opportunities
- Financial awards, such as scholarships, grants, loans, or reimbursement for expenses, from the state/territory to complete post-secondary education
- Other. Describe: EPS Grantees (and Future Career Pathways grants) require support of educators via career and college advising as well as support with accessing the State's \$3M Early Education Scholarship. This scholarship, held by the MA Department of Higher Education, supports degree attainment of individuals working in early education and care programs. _____

7.3.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. The state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is the main mechanism by which it evaluates progress in improving the quality of child care programs. The MA QRIS outlines a series of standards that programs must meet to demonstrate achievement of distinct levels of quality.

7.4 Quality Rating and Improvement System

Lead Agencies may respond in this section based on other systems of quality improvement, even if not called a QRIS, as long as the other quality improvement system contains the elements of a QRIS.

7.4.1 Does your state/territory have a quality rating and improvement system?

- Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS operating statewide or territory-wide. Describe how the QRIS is administered (e.g., statewide or locally or through CCR&R entities) and any partners and provide a link, if available. The MA QRIS is administered statewide by EEC staff. All programs from the mixed-delivery system are encouraged to participate, including licensed and license-exempt center based, public preschool, family child care, and afterschool/out-of-school time programs. The link to the MA QRIS is: <http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/qris/qris.html>
- Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS initiative operating as a pilot-test in a few localities or only a few levels but does not have a fully operating initiative on a statewide or territory-wide basis. Provide a link, if available. _____
- If Yes, describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. _____
- No, but the state/territory is in the QRIS development phase.
- No, the state/territory has no plans for QRIS development.

7.4.2 QRIS participation.

a) Are providers required to participate in the QRIS?

Participation is voluntary.

Participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving a subsidy. If checked, describe the relationship between QRIS participation and subsidy (e.g., minimum rating required, reimbursed at higher rates for achieving higher ratings, participation at any level). Providers serving children who receive subsidies are required to participate in QRIS. There is no minimum rating required for these programs. Providers that achieve Level 2 of the MA QRIS receive a 3 percent higher subsidy for the infants and toddlers they serve. Participation in MA QRIS is voluntary for providers not serving hilder who receive subsidies. _____

Participation is required for all providers.

b) Which types of settings or distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care participate in the state/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 prekindergarten or preschool programs

Local district-supported prekindergarten programs

Programs serving infants and toddlers

Programs serving school-age children

Faith-based settings

Tribally operated programs

Other. Describe: Military child care programs

7.4.3 Support and assess the quality of child care providers.

The Lead Agency may invest in the development, implementation, or enhancement of a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services. *Note:* If a Lead Agency decides to invest CCDF quality dollars in a QRIS, that agency can use the funding to assist in meeting consumer education requirements (98.33). If the Lead Agency has a QRIS, respond to questions 7.4.3 through 7.4.7.

Do the state/territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards?

No.

Yes. If yes, check the type of alignment, if any, between the state/territory's quality standards and other standards. Check all that apply.

- Programs that meet state/territory preK standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, there is a reciprocal agreement between preK programs and the quality improvement system).
- Programs that meet federal Head Start Program Performance Standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, there is a reciprocal agreement between Head Start programs and the quality improvement system).
- Programs that meet national accreditation standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, an alternative pathway exists to meeting the standards).
- Other. Describe: _____
- None.

7.4.4 Do the state/territory's quality standards build on its licensing requirements and other regulatory requirements?

- No.
- Yes. If yes, check any links between the state/territory's quality standards and licensing requirements.
 - Requires that a provider meet basic licensing requirements to qualify for the base level of the QRIS.
 - Embeds licensing into the QRIS.
 - State/territory license is a "rated" license.
 - Other. Describe: _____
 - Not linked.

7.4.5 Does the state/territory provide 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 that are provided through the QRIS.

- No.
- Yes. If yes, check all that apply.
 - One time grants, awards, or bonuses
 - Ongoing or periodic quality stipends
 - Higher subsidy payments
 - Training or technical assistance related to QRIS
 - Coaching/mentoring
 - Scholarships, bonuses, or increased compensation for degrees/certificates
 - Materials and supplies
 - Priority access for other grants or programs
 - Tax credits (providers or parents)
 - Payment of fees (e.g., licensing, accreditation)

Other:

None

7.4.6 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. The results of the MA QRIS validation study, which was completed in December 2016, showed encouraging outcomes at the program level and at the child-level. The study's researchers recommended that MA focus on streamlining QRIS standards, increasing the capacity of its infrastructure to support programs with the technical assistance they need, focus on the needs of independent programs that are not part of the early education systems or networks, provide more support for programs serving infants and toddlers, and address the requirements that did not distinguish quality among Levels. These recommendations are guiding the MA QRIS revisions process, which began when the validation study was completed. In-progress draft versions of the MA QRIS 2.0 make use of these recommendations, particularly with respect to simplifying criteria, and removing those that are not linked with program quality. MA anticipates that, in the long term, these steps will result in more programs reaching the upper tiers of the MA QRIS. The current iteration of the MA QRIS is still in effect as the revised MA QRIS 2.0 is in development. MA will continue to monitor closely the progress of programs in the current MA QRIS, looking for and addressing demographic trends correlated with program ratings. These include geography, the type of early education setting, and the ages of the children served. MA QRIS also plans to make some interim changes before the next generation is implemented. These changes will involve removing some criteria that programs suggest are obstacles to their QRIS advancement and that our researchers stress are not linked with program quality.

7.5 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the needs assessment to systematically review and improve the overall quality of care that infants and toddlers receive, the systems in place or needed to support and enhance the quality of infant and toddler providers, 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.

Lead Agencies are required to spend 3 percent of their total CCDF expenditures on activities to improve the supply and quality of their infant and toddler care.

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. These centers can serve as resources to child care providers to improve the quality of early childhood services for infants and toddlers from low-income families and to improve eligible child care providers' capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to

infants and toddlers from low-income families. Describe: EEC has implemented a statewide network of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Programs (CFCE), which are locally based programs serving families with children birth through school age. There are five main goals of the CFCE program: Universal and Targeted Outreach Strategies – Reaching and meeting the needs of children and families, especially those with multiple risk factors who are not engaged in the mixed delivery system of early education and out-of-school time services available through public schools, center-based, Head Start, and family child care programs. Linkages to Comprehensive Services – Ensuring that families have access to services that support their well-being and their children’s optimal development. Family Education – Supporting a dual-generation approach that strengthens the capacity of families as their child’s first teacher through: Child development education across all domains; and Evidence-based early literacy opportunities. Transition Supports - Coordinating activities and resources that maximize families’ access to supports through a broad range of transitions that may occur between a child’s birth to age eight that ultimately support school readiness and/or family stability. Examples of transitions include moving into and between early education and care settings as well as life transitions related to family relocation, parent job loss, etc. * Building Community Capacity - Strengthening the capacity of communities through CFCE council membership and community collaboration to engage and support families through intentional alignment of goals, approaches, and policies between agencies that serve young children and their families_

Establishing or expanding the operation of community- or neighborhood-based family child care networks. Describe: EEC has contracts with 42 Family Child Care Systems statewide, which provide resources and supports to family child care providers such as training, technical assistance and consultation, monitoring, quality improvement support, and referrals to health and social services for children in their care. FCC Systems may provide referrals to family child care providers. In 2017 EEC implemented a pilot where the nationally recognized Parent Child Home Program was made available to family child care educators. In 2018 this program has been continued and expanded. The role of the family child care system (network) has been strengthened as a method to deliver coaching on early literacy to infants and toddlers enrolled in family child care programs via the PCHP method. _

Providing training and professional development to enhance child care providers’ ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers. Describe: EPS Grantees provide professional development and coursework to promote and expand child care providers' ability to understand developmentally appropriate practices for infants and toddlers._

Providing coaching, mentoring, and/or technical assistance on this age group’s unique needs from statewide or territory-wide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists. Describe: EPS Grantees provide coaching and technical assistance to providers of all age groups. Coaches specialize in program and age types according to their qualifications._

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: 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: EEC has partnered with DPH's Early Intervention Program to establish and support Regional Consultation Programs (RCPs) to assist children with disabilities by providing expertise on inclusion and effective transition practices to early education and care programs. EEC also collaborates closely with EI to ensure services and supports are in place for children with disabilities to be included in their early care and education programs as well as provide supports to educators to ensure alignment of services for children and families. EEC is a participating member of DPH's Interagency Collaborating Council (ICC), which is a federally mandated statewide inter-agency group that advises and assists DPH on issues related to Early Intervention services. EEC has also developed a webinar training for Early Education and Care and Early Intervention Programs called Pathway to Collaboration in partnership with a subcommittee of the ICC.

Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's QRIS, including classroom inventories and assessments. Describe: EEC's community center based and public school based programs are assessed using the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale- Revised Edition (ITERS-R). MA's family child care providers use the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales- Revised Edition (FCCERS-R). Using evidenced-based criteria known to promote strong program quality and child outcomes, these tools encourage providers to embrace best practices while also holding them accountable for maintaining a high quality environment for the infants and toddlers they serve. Center Based/School Based programs are assessed using the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale- Revised Edition (ITERS-R). Family Child Care providers use the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales- Revised Edition (FCCERS-R). Using evidenced-based criteria known to promote strong program quality and child outcomes, these tools encourage providers to embrace best practices while also holding them accountable for maintaining a high quality environment for the infants and toddlers they serve.

Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's child care licensing regulations. Describe: EEC licensing regulations have specific components related to the health, safety and development of infants and toddlers.

Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and developmental guidelines. Describe: EEC has specific Early Learning Guidelines 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 that includes information on infant and toddler language, social-emotional, and both early literacy and numeracy cognitive development. Describe: Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees provide families with information about child development across all domains that support their knowledge and understanding of best practices in terms of caring for infants and toddlers. In addition to in-person educational opportunities, CFCEs share printed and electronic resources and information about ages and stages of development with families. EEC has developed resources for families that communicate this information that are posted on our website:

Carrying out other activities determined by the state/territory to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided within the state/territory and for which there is evidence that the

activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, cognitive and physical development, and/or well-being. Describe: EEC has engaged in an infant safe sleep public service campaign to improve the health and safety of infants participating in early education and care programs. In addition, EEC will be offering a home visiting grant in 2016 to support family child care providers who serve toddler age children. Lastly, the Department engaged in partnerships with the Registry of Motor Vehicles and the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority to emphasize the importance of reading to children and effective ways to communicate with children for parents and caregivers. Embedded within in one third of the CFCE grant programs is the Parent-Child Home Program. The Parent-Child Home Program supports and strengthens parents' skills in enhancing their children's cognitive development and school readiness. Program sites serve families challenged by poverty, low levels of education, language barriers, homelessness, and other potential obstacles to academic success. Services are delivered through an evidence-based model of intensive home visits to families not engaged in the formal mixed delivery system.

Other. Describe: _____

- 7.5.1 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. EEC has two primary sources of data regarding the quality of our infant and toddler care. First, our own staff conduct observations of our programs using Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale- Revised Edition (ITERS-R) for center-based programs, and Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales- Revised Edition (FCCERS-R) for family child care programs. Secondly, MA has research contracts with Environment Rating Scales reliable raters. The reporting from these observations provides valuable aggregate data relating to the quality of our programs for infants and toddlers. MA plans to continue using this data for policy development, developing targeted trainings and technical assistance to address trends in the data, and offering grant funding that focuses on specific areas that have been identified to need improvement.

7.6 Child Care Resource and Referral

A Lead Agency may expend funds to establish or expand a statewide system of child care resource and referral services (98.53(a)(5)). It can be coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the Lead Agency, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based, or regionally based lead child care resource and referral organization (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii)). This effort may include activities done by local or regional child care and resource referral agencies, as discussed in section 1.7.

- 7.6.1 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. ■ The CCRR contract contains several reporting requirements that the Department uses to evaluate the effectiveness of the CCRR Network. In addition, EEC requires

the CCRR Network to conduct satisfaction surveys with the individuals receiving services at the local level. The results of these surveys are sent to EEC on a monthly basis.

7.7 Facilitating Compliance With State Standards

7.7.1 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: Massachusetts uses CCDF quality funds to support the staffing of the Department of Early Education and Care's field operations unit, which includes licensors and investigators who are charged with inspecting monitoring and providing training/technical assistance to licensed early education programs throughout the Commonwealth.

7.7.2 Does the state/territory provide financial assistance to support child care providers in complying with minimum health and safety requirements?

No.

Yes. If yes, which types of providers can access this financial assistance?

Licensed CCDF providers

Licensed non-CCDF providers

License-exempt CCDF providers

Other. Describe: _____

7.7.3 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. The Department has been working to develop a system of differential licensing in the Field Operations Unit. This is a system of utilizing a limited number of regulatory indicators which have been proven to be statistically significant in determining compliance with the larger set of regulations. The Department is working to institute this system of regulatory compliance in all three types of licensing in Massachusetts: Family Child Care, Large Group and School Age Child Care and Residential and Placement. The goal of the differential licensing project is to increase the number of visits to licensed programs by decreasing the amount of time spent on each visit. The caseloads of the licensing staff are significantly higher than the national average and those recommended by national accrediting bodies. By decreasing the amount of time spent on visits utilizing the differential licensing model, the Department, even with high caseloads, anticipates the ability to make annual licensing visits to programs as required by the CCDBG Reauthorization.

7.8 Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Programs and Services

7.8.1 Describe how the state/territory measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services currently being offered, including any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the state/territory evaluates how those tools positively impact children. The MA QRIS measurement tools that are valid and reliable, and the

next generation MA QRIS will, as well. These tools include: · Environment Rating Scales (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales [ECERS-R] · Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scales [ITERS-R] · Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales [FCCERS-R] · School Age Childcare Environment Rating Scales [SACERS]) · Strengthening Families Protective Factors · Business Administration Scale (BAS) · Program Administration Scale (PAS) · Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT) · Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale, and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) At each MA QRIS Level, programs complete self-assessments of these tools to generate action steps for improvement. These action steps are directly submitted in each provider's Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP). EEC reviews self-assessments and CQIPs at Level 2, which is titled "Commitment to Quality." Environment Rating Scales self-assessment scores are verified by MA internal staff at Level 3, and by a reliable rater at Level 4. While these tools are validated by their authors, the MA QRIS validation study provided an additional layer of data tying child outcomes with participation in upper tier programs. This list of tools is being evaluated as Massachusetts revises its QRIS system. In order to streamline the QRIS to a more user-friendly format, some of these tools may be dropped and the CLASS tool may be introduced at higher levels of the QRIS in the future.

- 7.8.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the State/Territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. MA tracks the aggregate progress of its programs through regular monitoring. Monitoring is conducted with the purpose of analyzing which groups, such as geographic, linguistic, or program setting, are succeeded or struggling to advance in MA QRIS. MA uses that data to direct resources toward the groups that most need them. MA plans to set goals for participation and advancement in MA QRIS 2.0 once the revised system has been developed and and implemented

7.9 Accreditation Support

- 7.9.1 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 statewide or territory-wide. Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to child care centers and family child care homes to achieve accreditation. EPS supports programs in achieving accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the Council on Accreditation (COA) by providing targeted professional development and coaching geared towards accreditation and paying a portion of accreditation fees for programs._

Yes, the state/territory has supports operating as a pilot-test or in a few localities but not statewide or territory-wide. Describe: _____

No, but the state/territory is in the accreditation development phase.

No, the state/territory has no plans for accreditation development.

7.9.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. EEC tracks how many accredited programs are participating in the Massachusetts QRIS and their QRIS Levels. In addition, EEC receives data from EPS grantees related to the number of programs that are accredited in the Commonwealth.

7.10 Program Standards

7.10.1 How does the state/territory support state/territory or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to:

Health. Describe the supports: [redacted]

Mental health. Describe the supports: [redacted]

Nutrition. Describe the supports: [redacted]

Physical activity. Describe the supports: [redacted]

Physical development. Describe the supports: EEC has a strong focus on developmental screening. The current and next generations of MA QRIS include rigorous standards for building developmental screening into teaching and learning. To that end, MA dedicated 2018 grant funds to providing programs developmental screening kits, and offering training and technical assistance on how to using development screening kits and embedding it into instructional practice.

7.10.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. EEC hopes to see overall rate of useage of developmental screenings increase. This will also support programs' capacity to advance in the QRIS, as it is currently a requirement at level 3.

7.11 Other Quality Improvement Activities

7.11.1 List and describe any other activities that the state/territory provides to improve the quality of child care services, which may include consumer and provider education activities, and describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. MA is developing a plan to communicate the importance of program quality to stakeholders, including families, the field, policymakers, and partners. This plan includes a name for the MA QRIS, logo, tagline, and images to support program and family understanding of its value. These tools have been developed, are in a review process and are expected to be released along with the 2.0 version of the QRIS in the fall of 2018.

8 Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability

Program integrity and accountability activities are integral to the effective administration of the CCDF program. Lead Agencies are required to describe in their Plan effective internal controls that ensure integrity and accountability while maintaining the continuity of services (98.16(cc)). These accountability measures should address reducing fraud, waste, and abuse, including program violations and administrative errors.

This section includes topics on internal controls to ensure integrity and accountability and processes in place to investigate and recover fraudulent payments and to impose sanctions on clients or providers in response to fraud.

8.1 Internal Controls and Accountability Measures To Help Ensure Program Integrity

8.1.1 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that all its staff members and any staff members in other agencies who administer the CCDF program are informed and trained regarding program requirements and integrity. Check all that apply.

Issue policy manual

Issue policy change notices

Staff training. Describe: The ACR Unit receives ongoing training as policy and regulatory changes are made. These trainings take place during monthly Unit meetings as necessary.

Ongoing monitoring and assessment of policy implementation. Describe: In addition to the policy change notices and public hearings on the changes requiring regulatory change, EEC's Audit Compliance and Resolution Unit (ACR Unit) holds monthly staff meetings to discuss changes to regulations and policies, as well as common issues observed during fiscal monitoring reviews. The Associate Commissioner emails communications referencing policy changes to the ACR Unit as necessary.

Other. Describe:

8.1.2 Lead Agencies must ensure the integrity of the use of funds through sound fiscal management and must ensure that financial practices follow generally accepted accounting principles (98.68 (a)(1)). Describe the processes in place for the Lead Agency to ensure sound fiscal management practices for all expenditures of CCDF funds, including the following:

Verifying and processing billing records to ensure timely payments to providers. Describe: The EEC Accounting Unit oversees the process of verifying payment vouchers and invoices submitted by Contract Providers, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and Grantees. Controls are put in place to ensure segregation of duties for the review and approval of payment process

Fiscal oversight of grants and contracts. Describe: In accordance the ACR Unit Fiscal Monitoring Policies and Procedures (revised Spring 2017), has the responsibility are to ensure that CCRRs, Contracted Providers and Grantees (subrecipients) are in compliance with federal, state, and EEC policies and regulations. If non-compliance issues arise, it is the role of the DACR and the FMS to assure audit resolution. The responsibility includes seeking the required

payments from CCRRs/Contract Providers/Grantees of any federal financial assistance because of their failure to comply with federal laws and regulations.

Tracking systems to ensure reasonable and allowable costs. Describe: _____

Other. Describe: _____

8.1.3 Check and describe the processes that the Lead Agency will use to identify risk in their CCDF program. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

Conduct a risk assessment of policies and procedures. Describe: EEC conducts yearly reviews of each Unit's Policies and Procedures as it relates to the Internal Controls. In analyzing risks, EEC has analyzed the effectiveness of its internal control system in six areas: Internal Environment; Objective Setting; Event Identification; Risk Assessment; Information and Communication; and Monitoring. Each Unit's Policies and Procedure document informs the controls put in place to ensure high risk areas are fully reviewed and addressed.

Establish checks and balances to ensure program integrity. Describe: _____

Use supervisory reviews to ensure accuracy in eligibility determination. Describe: _____

Other. Describe: _____

8.1.4 Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud and other program violations to ensure program integrity. Program violations can include intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations, as defined by the Lead Agency. Administrative errors refer to areas identified through the error-rate review process. Check and describe any activities that the Lead Agency conducts to ensure program integrity.

a) Check which activities that the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify unintentional or intentional program violations.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, 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: Massachusetts's Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) application contains an audit log that reports all actions taken by subsidy administrators, including affected client record, the type of record, the action taken, the date the action was taken, and user id of the individual that took the action. The record types included in the report are person, placements, attendance, and eligibility. CCFA requires subsidy administrators to state the reason for making an adjustment to each record, which will help facilitates reviews conducted by the EEC Audit Unit.

Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records.

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Audit provider records.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Other. Describe: As described above at 8.1.3, EEC's ACR Unit engages in several activities to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure integrity of the CCDF

program including risk assessment analysis, on-site monitoring, review of attendance records, review of billing, and technical assistance through corrective action plans.

b) Check which activities the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify administrative errors.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Run system reports that flag errors (include types). Describe:

Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records.

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Audit provider records.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Other. Describe: As described above at 8.1.3, EEC's ACR Unit engages in several activities to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure integrity of the CCDF program including risk assessment analysis, on-site monitoring, review of attendance records, review of billing, and technical assistance through corrective action plans.

8.1.5 The Lead Agency is required to identify and recover misspent funds as a result of fraud, and it has the option to recover any misspent funds as a result of errors. Check and describe any activities that the Lead Agency uses to investigate and recover improper payments due to program violations or administrative errors, as defined by your state/territory.

a) Check activities that the Lead Agency uses to investigate and recover improper payments due to intentional program violations or fraud. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount. Describe: _____

Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

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 and describe the composition of the unit below.

Other. Describe: All state and federally funded providers that contract with EEC to provide and/or manage subsidized child care for eligible families including family child care systems and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRRs) are subject to fiscal and compliance monitoring by EECs ACR Unit. The monitoring program consists of activities to confirm that families receiving care through these contracts are eligible to receive services according to state and federal regulations and EEC policies. In addition, the monitoring program corroborates contractor compliance by verifying financial information, confirming

compliance with audits and evaluating internal controls. Through EEC's automated eligibility and billing system, Child Care Financial System (CCFA), EEC can recoup from a provider's future payments any sums that must be repaid related to services provided within the current fiscal year, including payments that were improperly authorized for families who were ineligible for child care subsidies. EEC can also recoup any improper payments made to CCRRs through CCFA by reducing future payments for services provided within the current fiscal year. EEC places outstanding debts owed by contractors, providers, and/or subsidy recipients on the Commonwealth's Billing and Accounts Receivable Subsystem (BARS) which may include prior fiscal year improper authorized payments. Through BARS, invoices are generated to debtors that include instructions on how to make payments and notifications of any rights which the debtor may have to request a hearing to challenge the debt amount. If the debtor fails to make any payments on a timely basis, the Commonwealth may initiate a collection action against the debtor and/or intercept any other State funds being paid to the debtor including, but not limited to, the intercept of tax refund payments. EEC works closely with the Massachusetts Operational Services Division and the Attorney General's Office, Division of Public Charities, in reviewing and following up with providers whose annual financial reports and/or filings indicate that improper payments may have occurred. In addition, and as discussed above, EEC fiscal monitoring staff conduct annual fiscal evaluations of its contracted child care providers which include reviews of providers' current fiscal year filings. When a contracted provider, voucher provider or subsidy recipient is suspected of committing fraud, the case is referred to the Office of the State Auditor/Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI), who may initiate an in-depth investigation. EEC and/or the Auditor's Office may also refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office or District Attorney's Office for further civil or criminal legal action, which could include the attachment and liquidation of assets.

- b) Describe the results of the Lead Agency activities regarding the investigation and recovery of fraud or intentional program violations. As described above at 8.1.5, EEC engages in several activities regarding the investigation and recovery of fraud or intentional program violations to ensure integrity of the CCDF program including recoupment, fiscal evaluations, and referrals to BSI.
- c) Check any activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount. Describe: _____
 - Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).
 - 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: All state and federally funded providers that contract with EEC to provide and/or manage subsidized child care for eligible families including family child care systems and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRRs) are subject to fiscal and compliance monitoring by EECs ACR Unit. The monitoring program consists of activities to confirm that families receiving care through these contracts are eligible to receive services according to state and federal regulations and EEC policies. In addition, the monitoring program corroborates contractor compliance by verifying financial information, confirming compliance with audits and evaluating internal controls.

Other. Describe: Through EEC's automated eligibility and billing system, Child Care Financial System (CCFA), EEC can recoup from a provider's future payments any sums that must be repaid related to services provided within the current fiscal year, including payments that were improperly authorized for families who were ineligible for child care subsidies. EEC can also recoup any improper payments made to CCRRs through CCFA by reducing future payments for services provided within the current fiscal year. EEC places outstanding debts owed by contractors, providers, and/or subsidy recipients on the Commonwealth's Billing and Accounts Receivable Subsystem (BARS) which may include prior fiscal year improper authorized payments. Through BARS, invoices are generated to debtors that include instructions on how to make payments and notifications of any rights which the debtor may have to request a hearing to challenge the debt amount. If the debtor fails to make any payments on a timely basis, the Commonwealth may initiate a collection action against the debtor and/or intercept any other State funds being paid to the debtor including, but not limited to, the intercept of tax refund payments. EEC works closely with the Massachusetts Operational Services Division and the Attorney General's Office, Division of Public Charities, in reviewing and following up with providers whose annual financial reports and/or filings indicate that improper payments may have occurred. In addition, and as discussed above, EEC fiscal monitoring staff conduct annual fiscal evaluations of its contracted child care providers which include reviews of providers' current fiscal year filings. When a contracted provider, voucher provider or subsidy recipient is suspected of committing fraud, the case is referred to the Office of the State Auditor/Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI), who may initiate an in-depth investigation. EEC and/or the Auditor's Office may also refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office or District Attorney's Office for further civil or criminal legal action, which could include the attachment and liquidation of assets.

Check any activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to administrative errors.

- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount. Describe: _____
- Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agency(ies) (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).
- 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 and describe the composition of the unit below.
- Other. Describe: Through EEC's automated eligibility and billing system, Child Care Financial System (CCFA), EEC can recoup from a provider's future payments any sums that must be repaid related to services provided within the current fiscal year, including payments that were improperly authorized for families who were ineligible for child care subsidies. EEC can also recoup any improper payments made to CCRRs through CCFA by reducing future payments for services provided within the current fiscal year. EEC places outstanding debts owed by contractors, providers, and/or subsidy recipients on the Commonwealth's Billing and Accounts Receivable Subsystem (BARS) which may include prior fiscal year improper authorized payments. Through BARS, invoices are generated to debtors that include instructions on how to make payments and notifications of any rights which the debtor may have to request a hearing to challenge the debt amount. If the debtor fails to make any payments on a timely basis, the Commonwealth may initiate a collection action against the debtor and/or intercept any other State funds being paid to the debtor including, but not limited to, the intercept of tax refund payments. EEC works closely with the Massachusetts Operational Services Division and the Attorney General's Office, Division of Public Charities, in reviewing and following up with providers whose annual financial reports and/or filings indicate that improper payments may have occurred. In addition, and as discussed above, EEC fiscal monitoring staff conduct annual fiscal evaluations of its contracted child care providers which include reviews of providers' current fiscal year filings. When a contracted provider, voucher provider or subsidy recipient is suspected of committing fraud, the case is referred to the Office of the State Auditor/Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI), who may initiate an in-depth investigation. EEC and/or the Auditor's Office may also refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office or District Attorney's Office for further civil or criminal legal action, which could include the attachment and liquidation of assets.

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?

- Disqualify the client. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified. Under current regulations, if Massachusetts determines that an applicant or recipient of subsidized child care committed fraud as part of his/her application, the Department reserves the right to disqualify the individual until the improper payment is repaid/recouped. Any time an applicant's child care subsidy is denied, terminated, or reduced or a recoupment is issued, the individual has the right to seek an appeal through the Department. If the individual is still aggrieved after the Department issues its final agency decision, s/he may seek further appeal of the decision in Superior Court. Under the

proposed regulations, EEC will create a tiered sanctions systems for Intentional Program Violations and Fraud with one, two, and three year bans depending on the severity and number of occurrences. Parent’s appeal rights will remain the same under the proposed regulations.

Disqualify the provider. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified. Under current regulations, if Massachusetts determines that an applicant or recipient of subsidized child care committed fraud as part of his/her application, the Department reserves the right to disqualify the individual until the improper payment is repaid/recouped. Any time an applicant's child care subsidy is denied, terminated, or reduced or a recoupment is issued, the individual has the right to seek an appeal through the Department. If the individual is still aggrieved after the Department issues its final agency decision, s/he may seek further appeal of the decision in Superior Court. Under the proposed regulations, EEC will create a tiered sanctions systems for Intentional Program Violations and Fraud with one, two, and three year bans depending on the severity and number of occurrences. Parent’s appeal rights will remain the same under the proposed regulations.

Prosecute criminally.

Other. Describe: In addition, EEC may also limit the number of referrals issued to voucher only providers and/or reduce the number of contract slots awarded to contracted providers. Although there are no administrative appeal rights to challenge such actions directly with EEC, a provider may challenge these decisions in the State's Superior Court through the Commonwealth's administrative procedures act, at Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, on the grounds that there has been an abuse of discretion. In addition, EEC may use a history of improper authorizations against a provider that is seeking to enter into a contract with the Department to provide early education and care services to children and families of the Commonwealth. Under such circumstances, a provider may be able to request a formal debriefing, in accordance with the terms of the procurement, from EEC's procurement officer as to the reasons for the decision and then can appeal that decision to EEC's General Counsel. The provider may further appeal the General Counsel's decision to the Operational Services Division (OSD) who oversees the Commonwealth procurement process