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Management Bulletin 20-10

Early Learning and Care Division

Subject: COVID-19 Guidance regarding Family Child Care Home Education Networks

Number: 20-10

Date: April 17, 2020

Expires: June 30, 2020

Authority: Senate Bill 117 (Chapter 3, Statutes of 2020)

Attention: Executive Directors and Program Directors of CFCC, and CCTR, CSPP and CMIGs that operate Family Child Care Home Education Networks

Purpose

This Management Bulletin (MB) is to notify and provide guidance to contractors who provide services through Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHENs), as defined in Education Code (EC) sections 8245 through 8247, and to address contractual and reporting requirements after the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 117. This MB does not apply to family child care homes (FCCH) that do not operate as part of a FCCHEN.

These are not permanent changes to statute or regulations. These requirements will apply until June 30, 2020. As the situation evolves and more information is available, the California Department of Education (CDE) may issue additional guidance.

Background

Pursuant to EC sections 8245 through 8247, contractors may operate FCCHENs that support educational objectives for children in licensed FCCH that serve families eligible for subsidized child care. Specifically, Family Child Care Home Education Networks (CFCC), General Child Care (CCTR), California State Preschool Programs (CSPP), and Migrant Child Care (CMIG) contractors may use all or part of their contract funds to provide services to children through FCCHENs.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency in California as a result of the threat of global pandemic disease Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). On March 17, 2020, the Governor signed SB 117 (Chapter 3, Statutes of 2020), which authorizes the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) to issue guidance to address contractual requirements

during Fiscal Year (FY) 2019–20 and ensure continuity of payments to state-subsidized early learning and care (ELC) programs.

Following the enactment of SB 117, the CDE released MB 20-04 on March 19, 2020, providing guidance to state-subsidized ELC programs about updated apportionment, attendance, and reporting requirements. This MB provides additional guidance to those contractors who provide services through FCCHENS.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor issued Executive Order (EO) N-33-20, which directed all residents immediately to heed current State public health directives to stay home. In accordance with this order, the State Public Health Officer has designated a list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” (essential workers) to help state, local, tribal, and industry partners as they work to protect communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. This list is available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/img/EssentialCriticalInfrastructureWorkers.pdf>. The CDE’s MB 20-06 addresses guidance for enrolling essential workers and at-risk populations pursuant to EO N-45-20 and EO N-47-20.

Policy

The Early Learning and Care Division (ELCD) contractors will be supported during periods of physical closure due to the COVID-19 state of emergency. Contractors will continue to receive apportionments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contractors who have physical and on-site closures and suspensions must continue program operations to support children and their families, staff and FCCH providers during periods of closure. In order to support contractors during this time, contractual requirements for contractors providing ELC services through FCCHENS are to be addressed as provided in the directive below.

Directive

Provider Payments

Providers Who are Closed

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENS must continue to pay FCCHEN providers who have closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, using the most recent monthly attendance record or invoice, except where otherwise provided below. In instances where FCCHEN providers have closed, CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors must submit an emergency closure request to ensure that reimbursement is not impacted. Contractors who receive reimbursement from CDE for the emergency closure must reimburse the FCCHEN provider according to the normal reimbursement schedule. To continue to receive reimbursement, FCCHEN contractors and family childcare providers must continue to meet contractual requirements, which are described further below.

The FCCHEN providers who are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are not able to submit

their monthly attendance record or invoice shall be reimbursed based on the certified need of each family. For families certified for a variable schedule, providers shall be reimbursed based on the maximum authorized hours of care.

Providers Who Remain Open

FCCHEN providers who remain open to serve children of essential worker families:

- These providers shall submit attendance records or invoices in accordance with current reporting policies. Providers may submit attendance records or an invoice without the parent signature if the parent is unable to sign due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The COVID-19 pandemic can be considered a family emergency and contractors may include child absences due to the COVID-19 pandemic as an excused absence.
- Regardless of attendance, providers shall be reimbursed based on the certified need of each family. For families certified for a variable schedule, reimbursement shall be made for the maximum authorized hours of certified need.
- Providers that are unable to submit an attendance record or invoice due to the COVID-19 pandemic should contact their CFCC, CCTR, CSPP or CMIG contractor. If providers are unable to submit an attendance record or invoice, the CFCC, CCTR, CSPP or CMIG contractor must reimburse providers as directed above.

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs should work with the family childcare providers to determine the best way to receive attendance and/or invoice records while ensuring local public health department guidelines are being met. This may include, but is not limited to, submitting electronic records, including scanned or digital signatures. MB 17-04, located at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1704.asp> provides directives for the use of digital signatures.

Program Quality Contractual Requirements During an Emergency Closure

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs and whose providers are physically closed but funded to be operational due to the COVID-19 pandemic must develop a plan around modifying program operations to address the needs of children and families who are no longer being served in a physical family child care home education network setting during an emergency closure. For contractors whose providers have closed, this plan must be provided to the contractor's assigned regional consultant by April 30, 2020. This plan must include engaging providers during the emergency closure to provide supportive services to children and families. This plan must include the following services, but may include others:

- Developing a family engagement plan for disasters
- Providing online resources and activities for children and families at home, including virtual opportunities
- To the extent practicable, assisting local efforts to provide child care and development services to essential employees
- Engaging existing statewide quality projects supporting 5 CCR contractors for local and/or virtual professional development and support activities
- Engaging external online/virtual professional development opportunities for program staff

Please refer to your local Quality Counts California (QCC) agency, Resource and Referral (R&R) program, and Local Planning Councils for available resources in your county.

Parent Involvement

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs and whose providers are currently open, or who are physically closed but funded to be operational due to the COVID-19 pandemic must collaborate with providers to contact families a minimum of twice a week to keep updated on the child and family, in compliance with 5 CCR Section 18275, and must document outreach efforts. To the greatest extent possible, outreach efforts should be conducted in the family's preferred language via phone call, email and/or text message. Outreach should consist of a mix of individual and group activities to maintain relationships and supports for families and children with each other and with program staff.

Contractors will collaborate with providers to communicate with families about their progress and needs with distance learning and the family's overall well-being, and provide resources and referrals to support services, social services, and health services as needed. Additional resources are available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/elcdcovid19.asp>.

Contractors should contact the local R&R agency <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/ragencylist.asp> and the local QCC consortia to identify additional resources to meet the needs of children and families. Parent conferences have been suspended through June 30, 2020; although contractors are encouraged to conduct these virtually whenever possible.

Education Program

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs and whose providers are currently open, or who are physically closed but funded to be operational, will collaborate with providers to provide all enrolled families with developmentally appropriate activities that can be done at home. Activities provided will comply with 5 CCR Section 18273 and must be documented.

Contractors are required to collaborate with providers to provide an activity plan for each child that can be incorporated into the daily activities and assists with creating a predictable routine in the family's home. Additional resources are available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/elcdcovid19.asp>. These activities should be similar to those activities conducted at the FCCHEN program and promote the developmental progress of social emotional skills, language and literacy skills, problem solving skills, math and science skills, and physical health. To the greatest extent possible, activities should be provided in the family's preferred language. Contractors who are currently open, or who are physically closed but funded to be operational, are required to collaborate with providers to offer virtual learning opportunities daily through various methods to maintain the developmental progress of currently enrolled children. These methods should include, but not be limited to, email, online learning platforms, video and/or activity packets. Contractors preparing activity packets should ensure the delivery of these packets comply with all social distancing requirements.

Contractors should contact the local R&R agency at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/rragencylist.asp> and the local QCC consortia to identify additional resources to meet the needs of children and families.

Staff Development

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs and whose providers are currently open or who are physically closed but funded to be operational will provide all staff members and providers with professional development. Staff Development will comply with 5 CCR 18274 and must be documented.

Contractors must provide professional development or access to professional development through distance learning opportunities for topics including, but not limited to, health and safety and child development.

Contractors should provide staff development using, but not limited to, the resources located at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/elcdcovid19.asp>, as well as the resources below.

- View resources, including eight comprehensive 60–80 minute Health and Safety Modules for Child Care, located at California Early Childhood Online at <https://www.caearlychildhoodonline.org/>
- Contact your local QCC to participate in professional communities of practice at <https://qualitycountsca.net/quality-partners/>
- Contact your local R&R agency for professional development opportunities. Resources are also available at <https://rrnetwork.org/provider-services/provider-support-resources>
- View professional development resources at the Head Start Early Childhood Knowledge Center at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/professional-development/article/professional-development-go>

Contractors should also contact the local R&R agency at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/rragencylist.asp> and the local QCC consortia to identify additional resources to meet the needs of children, families, and staff.

Desired Results Developmental Profile

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide ELC services through FCCHENs, are required to submit data in Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Online for any rating period that complete data has been collected. Contractors shall not upload partial data into DRDP Online. Information, resources, and training on the DRDP Online system can be found at <https://www.desiredresults.us/>.

Rating periods after March 17, 2020, are suspended through June 30, 2020.

Health and Social Services

The CFCC, CCTR, CSPP, and CMIG contractors who provide services through FCCHENs and whose providers are currently open or who are physically closed but funded to be operational are required to collaborate with providers to communicate with families about their progress and the

family's overall well-being. Contractors must identify, refer, and ensure that the families' health and social services needs are being met.

Environment Rating Scales

This requirement has been suspended through June 30, 2020. The CDE will assess the need for the Environmental Rating Scale (ERS), in light of the developments of the State of Emergency in California as a result of the threat of the global pandemic disease COVID-19, and will provide additional guidance regarding ERS at a later date if necessary.

Resources

The CDE ELCD has developed a COVID-19 pandemic guidance and resource page that includes answers to frequently asked questions, all MBs issued to implement pertinent legislation, and other relevant resources at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/elcdcovid19.asp>.

To be informed of updated information, please sign up for ELCD's email list at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/progspeclist.asp>.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Community Care Licensing Division has developed Provider Information Notice (PIN) 20-04-CCP, which provides a statewide waiver for operation of child care facilities, including licensees, registered TrustLine providers, and temporary employer sponsored child care, along with guidance for the implementation of prevention, containment, and mitigation measures for COVID-19. This PIN can be found on the CDSS website at <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/community-care-licensing>.

For more information about federal and state guidance and response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>, the California Department of Public Health's website at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>, and the California COVID-19 Response website at <https://covid19.ca.gov/>.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this MB, please contact your assigned ELCD Consultant via the CDE Consultant Regional Assignments web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/assignments.asp> or by phone at 916-322-6233.

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