

ANNUAL CHILD CARE RATE SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

The survey methodology has not changed from the last year. The local agencies will again send the survey results to the state in electronic format instead of on paper. **To establish the most accurate rate possible, we strongly encourage at least an 80% return rate for the annual survey.** If an agency does not reach this goal, the agency must explain the reason for the low return rate.

The attached survey forms are to be used by local agencies to collect price information from licensed group and licensed family child care providers. **Use of the survey form is required.** Exemptions to its use may be granted. If it is necessary for your county to request such an exemption, please send your proposed survey instrument, along with the justifications for the exemption, to CCS for approval before you distribute the survey.

By July 31, 2008, the DCF Bureau of Early Care and Education (BECE) will email each county/tribal Child Care Coordinator an Excel spreadsheet that will include all licensed family and group providers in the county. Also, a set of mailing labels in Word format will be emailed to each agency. There is no need to contact Licensing for this information. Do not include providers located in surrounding states. **For large child care chains, make sure to send a separate survey for each active site.**

Excel Spreadsheet:

The spreadsheet for each county will include providers who meet the following criteria:

- Provider has either a family or a group license as of July 10th, 2008.
- The program provides care to children ages 0-13 and provides full-time child care, at least 5 days a week and 5 hours per day. Others will be excluded.

The survey shall collect providers' current prices in September 2008. Providers are required to submit printed verification of prices that are charged to private pay families. The counties usually survey providers in September, if a school age program is not in operation in September, please have them report August prices and number of subsidy children in care.

Provider Information To Be Entered Onto The Spreadsheet

- Include the provider information even if the provider indicates to have less than 25% of slots paid by private pay families. The database that calculates the maximum rates, will automatically exclude programs that serve less than 25% private-pay children, however, the rate information for these programs is valuable for statistical purposes.
- Do **not** include providers on the spreadsheet if the provider only reports an hourly rate. In these cases, please contact the provider/center to find out what was the average weekly amount that the provider/center received for a full-time child in each age group in the month the survey. If the provider can demonstrate a valid weekly price, and provide printed verification, then include the provider's information in the spreadsheet.
- If your agency is aware that one of the programs listed on the spreadsheet does not enroll children from the general public, please exclude them from the survey.

Note: Please make sure that only WEEKLY prices are entered into the spread sheets. If hourly prices are entered, those can skew the maximum rates down considerably.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON RATE SURVEY

- 1. If provider does not sign the survey form, should the county include the provider's prices in the spreadsheet?**

If the prices are well documented in printed format, the local agency should include the provider in the survey.

- 2. If provider sends in the rates, but does not send the survey form. Should the provider's prices be included in the rate survey?**

If rates are well documented in **printed** format, not just written on piece of paper, the agency should include the provider's prices in the rate survey.

- 3. Provider sends a signed survey, but no written price list. Should the provider's prices be included?**

No, this provider's prices should not be included. Request the provider to submit her/his prices in a written format.

MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT RATE CALCULATION

State staff will enter information received from the local agencies into a database that will calculate the maximum rates. DCF will publish the 2008 maximum rates by December 5, 2008 or the department will notify the local agencies if the rates remain at the 2008 level.