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Governor Scott Walker
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Division of Early Care and Education
Bureau of Early Learning and Policy

OPERATIONS MEMO

No: 15-28

Date: 08/20/2015

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Child Care Coordinators
Training Staff

From: Katherine McGurk, Director
Bureau of Early Learning and Policy
Division of Early Care and Education
Department of Children and Families

SUBJECT: Child Care and School Program Collaboration

CROSS REFERENCE: Child Care Policy Section 3.6.20

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2015

PURPOSE: This Operations Memo introduces form DCF-F-2974. This form will be used by child care authorization workers to help determine correct authorizations when a child care program is co-located with an Early Head Start (EHS), Head Start (HS), 3 year old Kindergarten (3K) and 4 year old Kindergarten (4K) program. This form gathers information to assist the authorization worker in determining accurate authorizations.

In addition, this memo re-states policy regarding the Wisconsin Shares authorization when a child is enrolled in an Early Head Start (EHS), Head Start (HS), 3 year old Kindergarten (3K) and 4 year old Kindergarten (4K) program that is provided at the same location/site as the child care program. For readability, these programs will be referred to as "school programs" in the remainder of this memo.

BACKGROUND: Children benefit when their child care program and school program are co-located. This reduces disruption in the child's day and provides continuity of care gives throughout the day. Wisconsin Shares may be able to assist in the cost of these collaborative programs through the child care subsidy. This policy has been previously referred to as wrap-around care.

POLICY: There is no policy change being introduced in this memo; however, a verification process has been added and current policy has been re-stated to provide clarification.

Child care authorizations must always be based on the parent's need for child care while the parent is at work or participating in a combination of work and school or a W-2 program.

When the child care program is co-located with a school program that is regulated by a public school board or is part of a Head Start program the school hours can be included in the authorization if all of the following factors occur:

- The hours included in the authorization are times when the child's parent is engaged in an approved activity and child care is needed for the parent to do so;
- The school program and the child care program are co-located;
- The length of the child's school program is no more than four (4) hours per day; and,
- The length of the need for care is five (5) or more hours which include the school program hours.

If any of these factors do not exist, the authorization must be written only for the hours before or after the school program during which the parent is in need of child care in order to attend his or her approved activity. [Wisconsin Statute 49.155\(1m\)\(a\)](#) and [DCF 201.04\(5\)](#) limit the child care authorization to the time that the parent(s) need child care while engaged in their approved activity.

The decision to include the hours of co-located programs in the child's authorization is made by the authorization worker when the parent requests an authorization and provides the necessary documentation from the school program. It is the parent's responsibility to report any changes in the schedule that would impact their eligibility for the hours the child participates in the school program.

If the school program is located at a different site than where child care is provided, the authorization must cover only the hours the child attends the child care program and not cover the hours the child attends the school program.

Example 1: Charlie attends the Head Start program located at 1256 Water Street and the child care program that is located at 1536 Water Street. Charlie's authorization is limited to the hours he will spend at the child care program located at 1536 Water Street because the child care and the Head Start programs are in different locations.

Example 2: Dara attends a 4K program that is located at the child care center where she is enrolled. Dara's Mom needs child care from 7:30 am to 2:15 pm Monday – Friday. The 4K program is provided at Dara's child care center from 8:00 am to 11:30 pm Monday – Thursday. Dara's authorization may be written to include all of the hours that Dara's Mom needs child care which is 7:30 am to 2:15 pm Monday – Friday.

The length of the school program will be determined by one of two ways.

1. The scheduled hours of the school program described in the Head Start grant agreement, the public school board contract or other signed contract between the child care program and the funding source, or
2. By identifying the hours that school programming is available to non-Wisconsin Shares children at no cost – these are the Head Start hours.

FORM DCF-F-2974

1. The authorization worker must give this form to the parent;

2. The parent must give the form to the child care administrator, center director or lead teacher at the child care program;
3. The director or lead teacher must complete the form according to the instructions on the back of the form;
4. The child care program must then give the completed form to the parent;
5. The parent must provide the completed form to the authorization worker to be used to determine an accurate authorization.

This form can be submitted to the local agency via fax, regular mail, email or in person. Agency workers must use this form to document wrap-around child care and must scan the completed form into the Electronic Case File (ECF).

If the form is not returned to the agency within seven (7) business days, the authorization shall be limited to the child care hours without regard to the school program hours.

The new form is available in the DCF forms repository and is available in Spanish and Hmong.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/forms/doc/2974.doc>

CONTACTS: For Wisconsin Shares Child Care policy questions outside of Milwaukee County contact your Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO), Child Care Coordinators at http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/regional_operations/pdf/contact_list.pdf

For Child Care CARES/CWW, CSAW and CCPI IT systems processing questions statewide and policy questions in Milwaukee County: Child Care Help Desk at childcare@wisconsin.gov or (608) 264-1657.

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