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**State of Wisconsin  
Governor Scott Walker**

**TO: Income Maintenance Supervisors  
Income Maintenance Lead Workers  
Income Maintenance Staff  
Training Staff  
Child Care Coordinators**

**FROM: Kath McGurk, Director  
Bureau of Early Learning and Policy  
Division of Early Care and Education  
Department of Children and Families**

**DECE/BELP OPERATIONS MEMO**

**No: 17-10**

**DATE: 2/2/2017**

**Child Care**

**SUBJECT: Wisconsin Shares Authorization Policy Revisions - Chapter 2**

**CROSS REFERENCE:** Operations Memo 16-19

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 31, 2017

**PURPOSE:** This Operations Memo introduces the revised Chapter 2 Wisconsin Shares Authorization Policy to be used with authorizations written in EBT CSAW.

**BACKGROUND:** A draft version of Chapter 2 for EBT authorizations was made available with the publication of Operations Memo 16-19. Feedback on the draft policy manual was accepted from July through December 2016. This final version has incorporated the feedback and lessons learned throughout the Phase 1 implementation of MyWIChildCare (MWCC).

**POLICY:** Beginning February 1, 2017, all child care authorizations written in the EBT CSAW system shall be developed based on the policies contained in this version of Chapter 2.

Note: For authorizations that will be written in CSAW (not EBT CSAW), Milwaukee Early Care Administration (MECA) will continue to use the **April 2016** version of Chapter 2 until April 2, 2017 when full implementation of MWCC is complete. MECA, along with all other agencies will use this January 31, 2017 version of Chapter 2 for all authorizations written in EBT CSAW.

The entire chapter has been reorganized from the draft versions that were made available for comment during Phase 1. All references to attendance and enrollment authorizations, attendance reporting, attendance confirmation and reimbursements are obsolete and have been removed from policy.

Some of the changes that were previously published in the draft versions of Chapter 2 have been further modified, others have not changed. Local agency staff are strongly encouraged to review the new Chapter 2 policy in its entirety. Each change from the draft version of Chapter 2 is highlighted in yellow on the PDF version of the chapter. The summary below highlights policies from the April 2016 version and the previous draft versions of Chapter 2 that have changed:

**2.1.1.3 Public School Programs:** monitored by DCF/BECR and recorded in WISCCRS by DCF/BECR staff. W-9 form is collected by FIS.

**2.1.1.4 Child Care Provider Regulation Outside of the State:** These programs must be recorded in WISCCRS by DCF Central office staff. W-9 form is collected by FIS.

**2.1.5 Tax Reporting:** FIS and DCF will send 1099 tax forms to WREA child care providers for tax year 2016; DCF will send 1099 tax forms to all others for tax year 2016.

**2.2.3 Authorizations at Initial Eligibility:** Once eligibility has been determined the authorization can be backdated only to the RFA date.

**2.2.4 Authorizations for Ongoing Eligibility:** If the parent does not provide the information required to complete the authorization assessment within 30 days of the RFA date or does not request an authorization within 30 days of the RFA date the authorization may only be backdated to the first of the month the authorization request and all other necessary information was provided.

**2.2.5 Security Privileges for Retro Authorizations:** The privilege to write authorizations with a begin date earlier than the RFA date is limited to individuals with a higher level of security access in each local agency, and the privilege is limited to very limited situations such as Fair Hearing decisions that specify this requirement.

**2.2.6 Maximum of 75 Authorized Hours Per Week:** No child can be authorized for child care for more than 75 hours per week, this includes a child in two CC AGs and more than one child care provider. The only exception is when the Hardship Policy is applied.

**2.2.7.1 Authorization Comments:** EBT CSAW provides several comments and rolls all comments up to a summary page where all case comments are displayed. Comments are not required to be entered in both the EBT CSAW and the CWW systems.

**2.2.8 Approved Activity Schedules:** for varying schedules the authorization worker must collect four weeks of schedule in order for EBT CSAW to calculate the most accurate monthly average authorization.

**2.2.8.1 Correlation Between Approved Activity Verification and Schedule:** Verification of the approved activity schedule is not required, but the schedule must correlate to the verification of the approved activity (e.g. pay stubs, EVFE, etc.). This section provides guidance on determining whether the schedule correlates with the approved activity verification. If there is a discrepancy greater than 10 hours per week the worker must consider a number of items that could cause the discrepancy (please see the complete policy).

**2.2.8.2 New Employment with a Varying Schedule/On-Call Employment:** If the parent is not able to predict their future schedule, the worker shall write a four-week authorization based on the parent's best estimate of their schedule. The parent shall be instructed to record their actual work schedule. After the four-week authorization has ended, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the agency for a new authorization (please see the complete policy).

**2.2.8.4 Authorizations for Ongoing Self-Employment:** All travel time is already included in the hours allowed under this formula. The total authorized hours cannot exceed the calculated number. If the number of hours requested for child care is less than the calculated amount, travel time can be added, up to the calculated hours. Self-employed parents are eligible for school closed hours and inclement weather hours for their school aged children in addition to the maximum calculation.

**2.2.8.6 Authorizing for Gaps Between Approved Activities:** If the total gap time is two hours or less, the gap shall be included in the authorized hours. Additional guidance is provided in the policy for situations when the gap time is greater than two hours.

**2.2.8.9 Travel Time:** Daily travel must be documented. Travel time requests of more than one hour per day must be verified via an Internet map search or a public transportation schedule. Travel time that is one hour or less per day is not required to be verified unless the authorization worker questions the request.

**2.2.9.3 Authorizations for Children in Grades 1 through 12:** This section has been modified to include the following statement: Children who are homeschooled, truant, or suspended from school are not eligible for an authorization for inclement weather hours.

**2.2.9.6 Authorizations for Inclement Weather Related School Closures:** This section has been modified to include the following statement: Children who are homeschooled, truant, or suspended from school are not eligible for an authorization during the typical school day.

**2.2.9.4 Scheduled School Closures:** Parents must now identify specific child care needs on days that school is scheduled to be closed.

**2.2.12 Authorizations in Hardship Situations:** After a benefit load has been completed for a month during which a parent must suddenly change child care providers due to legitimate and unforeseen circumstance this policy allows another authorization to be created for a second child care provider for the same month (these situations need to continue to be sent to the help desk).

**2.2.13.1 Timely Reported Changes:** This section provides guidance for actions to take for timely reported changes and either timely verification or untimely verification and whether the change results in continuing or an end to eligibility.

**2.2.13.2 Untimely Reported Changes:** This section provides guidance for actions to take for untimely reported changes and either timely or untimely verification and whether the change results in continuing or an end to eligibility.

**2.2.14 Changing and Ending an Authorization to a Provider Mid-Month and After Benefit Load:** This section provides guidance for handling mid-month changes in child care providers.

**2.5.9.1 Inclusion Rate for Children with Special Needs:** Authorizations can exceed 50 hours per week. The hours above 50 are paid at the agency rate instead of the higher rate.

**2.8 Authorizations During Temporary Absences from Employment:** Absence from employment for a family vacation is limited to 2 weeks.

**2.8.1 Consecutive Episodes of Absence from Employment:** No authorization shall be written for consecutive periods of absence from employment under the policy at Section 2.8 unless the parent has returned to work for at least one (1) full week between periods of absence from employment.

### **CONTACTS:**

For Wisconsin Shares Child Care policy questions outside of Milwaukee County contact your Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO), Child Care Coordinators at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/wishares/pdf/coordinators.pdf>

For Child Care CARES/CWW, CSAW and CCPI Processing Questions statewide and policy questions in Milwaukee County contact the Child Care Help desk at: [childcare@wisconsin.gov](mailto:childcare@wisconsin.gov) or (608) 422-7200.

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