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State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker

TO: **Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
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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: 17-20

DATE: 4/06/2017

Child Care

SUBJECT: Updates to Wisconsin Shares Special Needs Inclusion Rate Form

CROSS REFERENCE: Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual Section 1.2, 1.4.3, 2.2.11, and 2.5.9.1; Form DCF-F-2976-E.

EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 6, 2017

PURPOSE: This memo introduces changes to DCF Form 2976-E, formerly Wisconsin Shares Special Needs Higher Rate Request and now called Wisconsin Shares Special Needs *Inclusion* Rate Request.

BACKGROUND: Form DCF-F-2976-E is required to request and document circumstances that necessitate a higher subsidy amount.

The form has been revised to meet two goals: to be compatible with the implementation of MyWICChildCare EBT cards and to support provider compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

DCF Form 2976 previously allowed higher subsidy rates to be paid to providers caring for children with special needs in some cases. The department is no longer making payments to providers.

In broad terms, the ADA prohibits child care providers from charging more for caring for a child with special needs. Language has been clarified to reflect this and added to note that child care providers are responsible for ADA compliance.

POLICY: Wisconsin Shares policy permits that parents of children with special needs may be eligible for a higher subsidy amount to reflect the increased costs their provider incurs in providing care for their child. The increased rate should support the provider in caring for the child: for example, specialized training, services, and/or environmental adaptations.

Prior to the implementation of MyWICChildCare EBT cards, child care providers were reimbursed directly by DCF for care provided to families participating in Wisconsin Shares. This included any additional rates paid for children with special needs.

Now parents are responsible for paying their child care providers using their EBT cards and no direct subsidy payments are made to providers. The department has decided to continue to make additional subsidy amounts available to parents to reflect the costs a provider may incur in caring for their child with special needs.

The form has been renamed Wisconsin Shares Special Needs Inclusion Rate Request to emphasize that the additional subsidy amount is meant to support the child with special needs. Revisions to Section 2 also improved clarity as to the documentation needed.

Wisconsin Shares Policy Section 2.5.9.1 was recently updated to reflect that child care providers are responsible for compliance with all aspects of the ADA. This language has also been added to DCF-F-2976-E.

Providers who have questions about ADA compliance should contact their YoungStar Technical Consultant.

CONTACTS: For Wisconsin Shares Child Care policy questions outside of Milwaukee County contact your Bureau of Regional Operations Child Care Coordinator, listed at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/regionaloperations>.

For Child Care CARES/CWW, CSAW and CCPI Processing Questions statewide and policy questions in Milwaukee County contact the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance line at childcare@wisconsin.gov or (608) 422-7200.

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