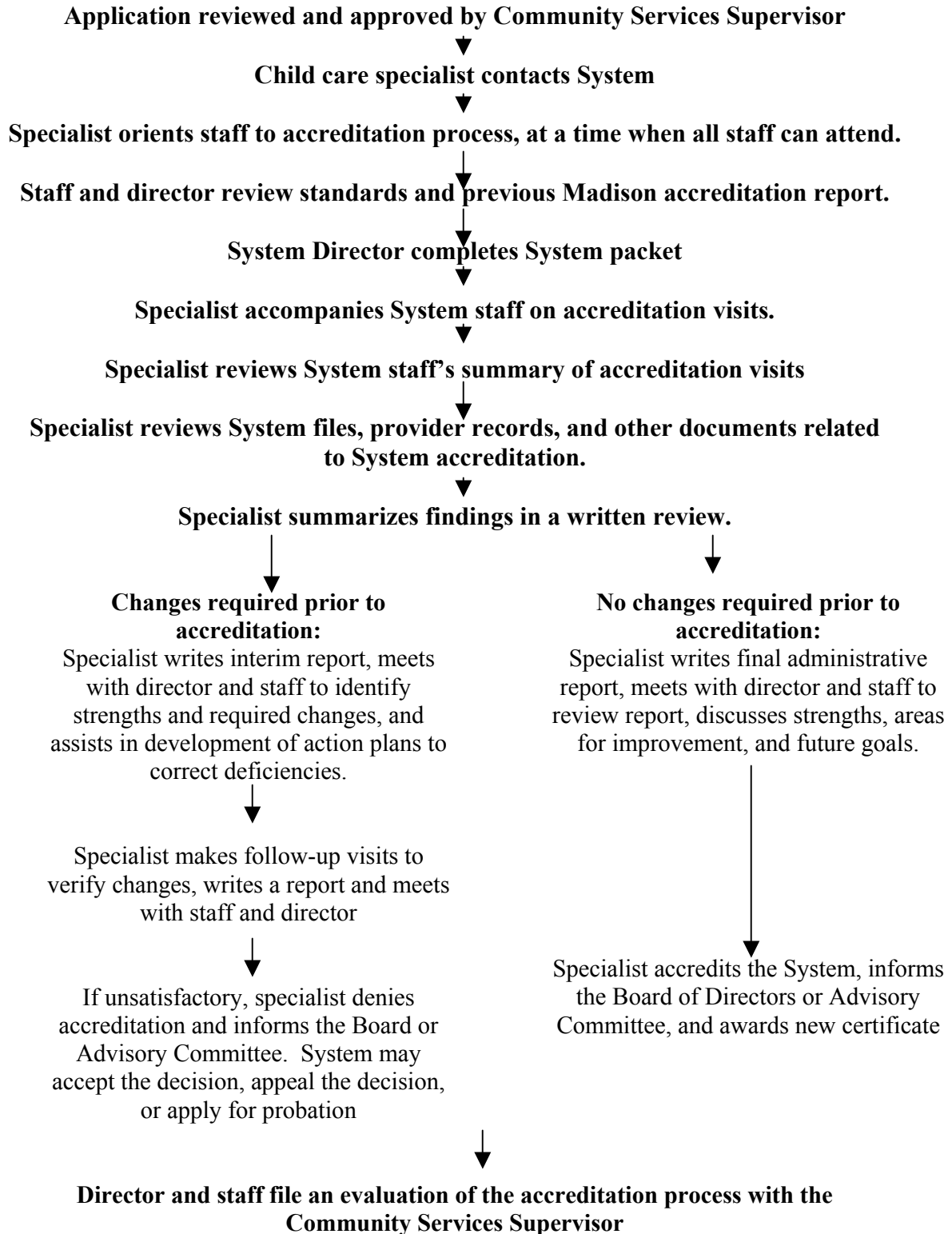


**FAMILY CHILD CARE SYSTEM STANDARDS  
FOR CITY OF MADISON ACCREDITATION  
February 2006**

<b>The process of Madison accreditation..</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Organizational prerequisites</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Definitions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Standards</b>	
<b>I. Relationship Between The System And The City Of Madison</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A. Madison Ordinance</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>B. Role of the City Specialist</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>C. Role of the Child Care Assistance Coordinator</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>D. Role of the Office of Community Services Supervisor</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. System Organization And Administration</b>	
<b>A. Administration</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>B. Operating Policies</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>C. Governance</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>D. Financial Management</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>E. Personnel</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>F. Health and Safety</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>III. Accreditation of Family Child Care Homes</b>	
<b>A. Compliance with ordinance</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>B. Compliance with Standards</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>C. Training</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV. Services to Providers</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>V. Services to Families</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>VI. Community Collaboration</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	
<b>1. Non-sectarian practice</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2. Compliance with state licensing or county certification</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3. Provider participation in the annual City rate survey</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4. Exception to group size and provider:child ratios</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5. Accreditation for evening, night-time, overnight, and early morning care.</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>6. Certificates</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>7. Child Care Assistance Program</b>	<b>25</b>

# CITY OF MADISON FAMILY CHILD CARE SYSTEM ACCREDITATION



**ORGANIZATIONAL PREREQUISITES FOR CITY OF MADISON  
FAMILY CHILD CARE SYSTEM ACCREDITATION  
February 2006**

In order to be City of Madison Accredited, the Family Child Care System must meet organizational prerequisites established by Madison ordinances, Section 3.18.

	Non-profit corporation	Family Child Care System in a non-profit multi-service corporation	Family Child Care System of a privately owned corporation	Family Child Care System in a government-sponsored organization
Incorporation	Registered as a nonprofit corporation under Chapter 181, Wis. Stats	Administered by an entity that is registered as a non-profit corporation under Chapter 181, Wis. Stats	Administered by an entity that is registered as a business corporation under Chapter 180, Wis. Stats.	Directly administered by a government agency or public education body, or through a contract with such an agency or body
Board of Directors with final authority over Family Child Care System policy, and budget, and over the hire, supervision and termination of the director of the Family Child Care System	Yes	Yes	No	No
Processes that ensure parent participation in decisions regarding budget and structure of the Family Child Care System and hiring, supervision, termination of the director of the Family Child Care System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental participation in the policy formation of the Family Child Care System.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public accountability in the use of public resources.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Compliance with <i>Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Systems</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Family Child Care Systems which teach, practice or promote religion in hiring, provider membership, policies or materials are ineligible.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THE MADISON ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE SYSTEMS

**Agency:** The corporation or other entity that has legal responsibility for the Family Child Care System.

**Family Child Care System:** The umbrella organization that provides referral of children, supervision of family child care home programs, and training of System staff.

**Family Child Care Home Program:** A child care/child development program for eight or fewer children at one time and located in the dwelling unit of the provider, or in a facility that it either county-certified or state licensed as a family child care program.

**Family Child Care Provider:** Referred to here as “Provider,” the person (or people) who are members of the Family Child Care System for purpose of becoming or remaining a Madison accredited family child care home program.

**Staff:** The staff of the Family Child Care System

**Director:** The individual who serves as the chief administrator of the Family Child Care System.

**Agency Director:** In a multi-service, government sponsored or privately owned corporation, the individual who serves as chief administrator of the corporation.

**Strengths:** In order to be cited as a strength, there must be *a great deal of evidence* that the standard(s) is (are) met *consistently*. Where there is a specific behavior mentioned in the standard, it is clear from observations that this behavior *happens most of the time*.

**Areas for improvement:** This category generally signifies “work in progress.” There is *some evidence* that the statement is accurate, and that the behavior *happens some of the time*. However, certain practices are of sufficient importance that they would be classified as a required change even if a problem happens only once. (For example, a failure to report child abuse and neglect, even if this failure occurs only once, would result in required changes.)

**Required changes:** The standard is not met. There is *little evidence* that this statement is accurate. The behavior described in the standard *happens rarely or seldom*. Also, chronic failure to implement areas of improvement over a series of reviews may result in these areas becoming required changes.

**Interim review:** A review written by the specialist which focuses on required changes that must be addressed before accreditation or re-accreditation can be granted.

**Action plan:** A written plan describing (1) the unmet standard, (2) the actions to be taken to correct the deficiency, (3) who is responsible for various steps and (4) the date by which these steps will be completed. All interim reviews will include a plan of action. A plan of action may sometimes be required even if the System is re-accredited.

## I. RELATIONSHIP OF THE SYSTEM TO THE CITY OF MADISON OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

### A. Madison Ordinance

Requirements established by ordinance for eligibility for accreditation by the City of Madison are set forth in Madison General Ordinances, 3.18 .

### B. Role of the City specialist

1. Provides on-going consultation to System staff
2. Conducts annual review of the System to assure compliance with Family Child Care System standards
3. Receives recommendations from system staff concerning provider exceptions to standards, and approves or denies requests.
4. Receives appeals to System decisions related to conflicts between parents and providers, if internal attempts at resolution are not successful.
5. Works with System staff and the City Child Care Assistance Coordinator to facilitate enrollment of City-funded children in accredited family child care homes.
6. Signs annual accreditation letter to provider, as specified in Appendix 6.
7. Works with the Office of Community Services Community Resources Contract manager to develop and manage City contracts for services with Family Child Care Systems.

### C. Role of the City Child Care Assistance coordinator

1. Conducts the annual rate survey, as described in Appendix 3.
2. Determines family eligibility for City Child Care Assistance Program.
3. Communicates with providers concerning payment and billing.
4. Communicates with parents and providers concerning problems and questions related to financial problems and payments that involve the City Child Care assistance program.

### D. Role of the Office of Community Services Supervisor

1. Awards accreditation certificate, at the recommendation of System staff.
2. Receives appeals of decisions of System staff that impact on the provider's accreditation, if internal attempts at resolution are not successful.
3. Receives appeals of decisions of the City specialist concerning system accreditation.
4. Receives appeals of decisions of the City specialist concerning provider exceptions to standards.

## II. SYSTEM ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

### A. Administration

#### Annual evaluation and goal-setting.

- A-1. At least annually, administrators, families, staff, providers, and other routinely participating adults are involved in evaluating the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, families, and providers.

- There is a written evaluation plan (e.g., who initiates, conducts and summarizes, timeline and method used).
  - The evaluation plan is designed in such a way as to encourage participation of all families and providers.
- A-2. The System uses the results of evaluation to establish goals for continuous improvement and innovation.
- Goals and plans for improvement are written, on file, and reported to all providers and families.
  - The evaluation examines the adequacy of staff compensation and benefits, the rates and reasons for staff turnover, and the effect of turnover on the quality of the System's services.
  - The evaluation examines the rates and reasons for provider turnover, and the effect of turnover on the quality of services to parents and children.

### Records

- A-3. Records are kept on the Family Child Care System and related operations.
- A-4. Confidential personnel files are kept for System staff, including resumes with record of experiences, transcripts of education, documentation of ongoing professional development and results of performance evaluation.
- A-5. Records are maintained on each provider who is accredited or in process of accreditation.
- A-6. The System maintains a public file for each provider that at a minimum contains the following information:
- Application,
  - Current contract
  - Parent evaluations received in the most recent accreditation review
  - Results of the most recent accreditation review
  - A summary of founded complaints within the 12 months
  - Evidence of review of documents related to accreditation (insurance, health exam, state or county regulatory status, for example)
- A-7. The System has written policies concerning maintenance of and access to files of a sensitive nature.

### Appeal of administrative decisions

- A-8. The System has a procedure for appealing administrative decisions related to implementation of policies and procedures. This procedure spells out:
- Steps and time lines
  - Appeal to System director
  - Role of the System Advisory Committee and/or Agency Board

## B. Operating policies

- B-1. The System has written policies and procedures for operating, including policies related to:
- Contracts and agreements between the System and member homes
  - Eligibility for System services by providers and families
  - Payment and refund of fees by providers and families, including eligibility and application process for reduction or waiver of fees, if any.
  - Application, enrollment, discipline and termination of providers
  - Confidentiality
  - Responding to concerns or complaints from parents and providers
  - Procedure for appealing administrative decisions
  - Maintenance of and access to provider records
  - Decision-making and governance
  - Delegation of authority
  - Financial management
  - Personnel management
- B-2. Current copies of relevant agency policies are accessible to all staff.
- B-3. There is a procedure for keeping all staff informed of new or revised policies.

## C. Governance

- C-1. The Family Child Care System is organized and governed in a manner consistent with the Madison Ordinances, Section 3.18.
- a. If the Family Child Care System is a single service corporation under Chapter 181, Wis. Stats. it shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The Board shall have a minimum of five (5) members. A minimum of one-third (1/3) of those members shall be parents of children currently enrolled in the program or whose children have been enrolled in the program in the past year. A minimum of 1/3 shall be family child care providers who are currently members of the System, or who have been members of the System within the last year. The parent and provider members shall be chosen in a process in which all currently enrolled parents and providers have a fair opportunity to participate. The Board shall have final authority over budget, program, and hiring, supervision, and termination of the Family Child Care System's Director.
  - b. If the Family Child Care System is part of a larger, multi-service corporation registered with the Sec. of State as a nonprofit corporation under chapter 181, Wis. Stats. the corporation shall be governed by a Board of Directors and the Family Child Care System shall have a process that ensures parent and provider participation regarding budget and structure of the Family Child Care System, and regarding the hire, supervision, and termination of the System director.
  - c. If the Family Child Care System is a business corporation registered with the Sec. of State under Chapter 180 Wis. Stats. or a government sponsored Family Child Care

System, its Board of Directors or governing body shall ensure public accountability in the use of public resources and parental participation in the policy formation of the System. The System shall have processes that ensure parent participation regarding budget and structure of the System and regarding the hire, supervision, and termination of the Director of the System.

- C-2. The System has written policies and processes in place to ensure the specified oversight of the System as stated in C-1. These processes must include proper orientation of governing bodies, mechanisms for timely exchange of information, clearly outlined roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms to ensure required levels of parental and provider input.
- There is a written plan for the delegation of authority.
  - Where a Family Child Care System has private owners or sponsors that have authority over System staff and operations, these private owners or sponsors shall receive an orientation to their responsibilities.
  - Parents and providers shall receive an orientation to their role and responsibilities in regard to policy formation of the System.
  - If the System is organized as described in C-1 b or c above, the System has an Advisory Committee that is comprised of at least 1/3 parents and 1/3 providers who are either currently parents and providers in the System, or who have been within the last year.
  - The Board of Directors and Advisory Committee shall receive an orientation to their roles and responsibilities.
  - The System provides for clear accountability in the use of public resources. For example, the System makes information available on grant proposals, awards, and uses of funding received from City, State, and County for the operation of the Family Child Care System.
  - Board members, Advisory Committee members, private owners and other administrators such as the agency director are informed about elements and methods involved in implementing a high quality, developmentally appropriate Family Child Care System and family child care home program.
  - The staff, Board, and Advisory Committee are involved in the development of policies as described in their charter.
  - The director and/or other staff report to the private owners, Board, or Advisory Committee on the effectiveness of policy, and refer needed policy revisions for review as appropriate.
  - The Board and Advisory Committee have a clear record of meetings and actions and a procedure for parents, providers and staff to present concerns and information to the Board or Advisory Committee and place specific items on meeting agendas.
  - All parents, providers and staff have access to advanced notices of Board and Advisory Committee meetings, including the agenda, topics to be discussed, and actions to be taken.
  - Minutes of all Board and Advisory Committee meetings are maintained and available to all parents, providers and staff.
  - Board, Advisory Committee, and staff receive orientation to confidentiality policies and procedures.

- Board, Advisory Committee, and staff practice proper procedures to insure confidentiality whenever sensitive issues arise (e.g., termination of a provider's enrollment, collection of fees, issues regarding a particular staff member, provider or family).
- Policy or bylaws define when meetings of the Board or Advisory Committee can be closed.

## D. Financial Management

D-1. Staff, Board, Advisory Committee, parents and providers have access to accurate and timely information on the System's finances.

- The System director, agency administrator, or appropriate fiscal agent informs staff of their budget, and has clear procedures for staff to obtain necessary program equipment and supplies.
- Staff set priorities and plan purchases based upon the approved budget.
- All families and providers have a mechanism for timely review of budget adequacy to meet program needs. All families and providers have a way to communicate their evaluation of budget adequacy. This may be accomplished through the Advisory Committee, newsletter announcement, or similar methods.
- No multi-service corporation shall allocate to its Family Child Care System an amount less than the program's gross income in fees, designated fundraising, and public contracts.

D.2. Fiscal records are kept with evidence of long-range budgeting and sound financial planning.

- There is a clear and readable budget for the System, with annual approval (Board) or review (Advisory Committee).
- The Board, Advisory Committee and owners review income and expenditures at least quarterly and adjust the budget as necessary.
- The annual budget reflects expense and revenue projections.
- Explanations and rationale are available to explain what each budget item represents.
- The System uses a variety of accepted practices to provide for adequate cash flow (e.g., prompt deposit of income; methods for informing parents of money owed; clear policies concerning delinquent fees).
- The System uses a variety of accepted practices to protect its finances (e.g., prompt reconciliation of bank statements; separation of responsibilities for receiving income and reconciling statements; reserve payroll tax account; review of accounts by an objective party).
- There is an adequate breakdown of income and expense items to permit the effective monitoring of ongoing income and expenditures (e.g., separate lines for payroll taxes, training, and salaries; separation of equipment and consumables, with further separation by program, office, custodial, etc.).
- The budget is adequate to provide realistic funding for identified goals (e.g., if the program seeks to provide specialized services to providers or families, adequate support is provided in the budget).

- D-3. The System maintains accident protection and liability insurance. Vehicle insurance is maintained on any vehicle owned or leased by the System and used to carry out the work of the System.

## E. Personnel

### Qualifications

- E-1. Staff who work directly with providers have experiences and qualifications that lead to knowledge of regulated family child care. These qualifications may include a combination of training and experience such as:
- Training in Early Childhood Care and Education/Child Development at least equivalent to what would be obtained in a CDA credential.
  - Experience as a family child care provider
  - Experience as a teacher or director in a center-based early childhood education setting
  - Knowledge of regulatory Systems governing family child care (certification, licensing)
- E-2. Staff who work with parents and providers demonstrate skills required to communicate effectively, including:
- Written and oral communication skills
  - Capacity to work with diverse populations
  - Ability to assist others in locating needed resources, solving problems, and mediating conflicts.
- E-3. Staff who work directly with children are 18 years of age or older and demonstrate appropriate characteristics for working with children as described in the *Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers*.
- E-4. The System Director has expertise (acquired through formal education and experience) in early childhood education/child development, family child care, and administration such as human resources and financial management.

### Orientation and training

- E-4. New System staff, including interns and volunteers, are adequately oriented about the goals and philosophy of the System.
- There is a timely orientation of new staff (paid and volunteer) to System policies and procedures.
  - Outside resource people, students and researchers are given clear direction about their roles in the System.
- E-5. The System provides regular opportunities for staff to participate in ongoing professional development to improve skills in working with providers and families or to prepare them to assume more responsible positions. The amount and kind of continuing education

provided will vary depending on the needs of the System, the pre-service qualifications of staff, and the number of staff pursuing higher education while employed. Professional development experiences should be credit-bearing whenever possible.

#### Personnel Policies

- E-6. The System has written personnel policies including job descriptions; salary scales with increments based on professional qualifications, length of employment, and performance; benefits; resignation and termination; and grievance procedures.
- For each staff position there is an accurate and specific job description and a statement that describes duties, supervisor and evaluation procedures.
  - There are clear policies on hiring, probation, disciplinary procedures and termination of employees.
  - There is a written grievance procedure that has clear steps to be followed and establishes timelines that assure a prompt and fair hearing of grievances by or against staff.
  - Personnel practices and work rules define expected worker behavior, e.g., working with children, families and providers, confidentiality, implementation of policies, attendance and punctuality, and reporting of child abuse and neglect.
  - Personnel practices and work rules are sensitive to employee needs.
  - Staff experiencing personal problems are given referrals and resources to assist them to remain effective in their jobs.
  - The personnel policies shall ensure parent participation in the hiring, supervision and termination of the Director of the Family Child Care System.
- E-7. Hiring practices are non-discriminatory. Every effort is made to hire staff who reflect diverse cultural, race, and linguistic characteristics as needed to communicate with the families and providers served.
- E-8. Benefit packages for full-time staff include paid leave (annual, sick, and/or personal), medical insurance, and retirement. Other benefits such as continued education may be negotiated as unique to the situation. Benefits for part-time staff (who are employed at least half-time) are available on a prorated basis.
- E-9. The System provides annual raises, with goals to provide an annual cost of living increase and to establish a living wage for the lowest paid staff.

#### Communication

- E10. Staff and administrators plan and consult together frequently about the System, providers, and families.
- Regular staff meetings are held for staff to consult with each other and plan for implementing and attaining goals, to plan for working effectively with providers and families, and to discuss the System and working conditions.
  - Effective methods of communication are in place to insure smooth operation of the System.

- E-11. Communication between staff, director, and supervisors models respect for the valuable work of family child care.
- Staff receive positive recognition for their skills and accomplishments.
  - Ideas and opinions of staff are acknowledged.

#### Confidentiality

- E-12. Staff keep information about children, families, providers and associates confidential. Staff refrain from commenting about children, providers and families in the presence of people not employed by the System.
- The System has developed written policies of respect for and protection of families' and providers' right to confidentiality.
  - Staff and volunteers receive orientation to confidentiality policy/procedures.
  - Staff and volunteers practice proper procedures to insure confidentiality whenever sensitive issues arise (e.g., termination of enrollment, collection of fees, issues regarding a particular child, provider or family).

#### Chain of command

- E-13. An appropriate person on-site is designated to assume authority and to take action in an emergency, in the event of the System Director's absence.

#### Staff evaluation and Supervision

- E-14. All System staff, including the Director, are evaluated at least annually by their supervisor, or others as appropriate.
- There is a clearly defined supervisory plan for all staff, including the Director.
  - There is a written staff evaluation plan that specifies who will initiate, implement, and participate in employee evaluation, and who will communicate the results of the evaluation to the employee.
  - The annual evaluation of the Director of the System includes procedures that support meaningful parent and provider input.
  - Supervision procedures take into account the varying needs, experiences, and skills of all staff, paid and volunteer.
  - Each supervisor's evaluation will include a review of the effectiveness of her/his work with the staff she/he supervises.
- E-15. Results of staff evaluation are written and confidential. They are discussed privately with the staff member.
- E-16. Staff evaluations include observation of the employee's work with providers. Evaluation is based on the employee's job description and previously established goals for improvement.
- E-17. Staff are informed of evaluation criteria in advance.
- E-18. Staff have an opportunity to evaluate their own performance.
- E-19. A plan for staff training is generated from the evaluation process.

## **F. Health and Safety**

- F-1. Staff who spends time in family child care homes are free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's health. Staff receive pre-employment health exam, tuberculosis tests and evaluation of any infection. Hiring practices include careful checking of personal references of all potential new employees or volunteers. New staff members serve a probationary employment period during which the director or other qualified person makes a professional judgment as to their physical and psychological competence for working around children.
- F-2. System staff receive training in the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- F-3. Suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect by families, staff, providers, volunteers, or others are reported to the appropriate local agencies.

## **III. FAMILY CHILD CARE ACCREDITATION**

### **A. Compliance with Ordinance**

- A-1. The System will assure that family child care homes are free from religious bias in instructional policies, practices and materials. Where a family child care provider has employees, the System will assure that employees of the provider are hired without regard to religious beliefs and affiliations. Requirements are outlined in Appendix 1
- A-2. The Family Child Care System will monitor the status of each provider's compliance with state licensing or county certification rules, as outlined in Appendix 2.
- A-3. The System will assure that all providers complete the annual rate survey conducted by the City's Child Care Assistance coordinator, as outlined in Appendix 3.

### **B. Compliance with Standards**

- B-1. The Family Child Care System has a written plan for reviewing family child care homes that wish to be Madison accredited or re-accredited. The plan includes:
- Methods to be used
  - Timetable for reviews
  - Procedure for establishing and monitoring goals for improvement for individual providers.
- B-2. The family child care System annually reviews each family child care home program to determine whether the provider and home are in compliance with the City of Madison Accreditation for Family Child Care Providers.
- B-3. The annual compliance review of individual providers includes the following:

- The provider's self-evaluation (completion of the appropriate provider packet)
- Assessment of at least one observer designated by the System who observes the family child care program during the hours for which the home is accredited.
- Evaluation by parents of the provider.
- A review of the provider's policies, contracts, printed materials and business practices to assure consistency with the Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers.
- Review of the provider's compliance with state licensing or county certification.

B-4. The System reviews provider applications for exception to the group size and provider:child ratios, and makes recommendations to the office of Community Services, as outlined in Appendix 4.

B-5. The System explicitly determines whether member providers will be accredited for family child care during evening, nighttime, overnight, and early morning hours. If so, the System develops policies and procedures that will assure the same level of support and review as that of providers accredited for daytime care, as outlined in Appendix 5.

B-6. Upon determining that a family child care provider meets the Standards for Accreditation of Family Child Care Homes, the System will initiate a certificate as outlined in Appendix 6.

B-7. The System has an appeal procedure that may be used if a provider does not agree with a decision of System staff that impacts on the provider's accreditation. The procedure includes the following elements:

- Steps and timelines
- Role of System staff, director, and Advisory Committee
- Provision for appeal to the Supervisor of the Office of Community Services if internal attempts at resolution are not successful.

B-8. The System provides the Office of Community Services with a monthly report of System providers, including:

- Addresses and phone numbers of accredited providers
- Newly accredited providers
- Providers re-accredited
- Newly accepted provider applications
- Provider address changes
- Providers terminated
- System staff assignments

## C. Training

C-1. The System offers training opportunities for member providers that help providers meet the 20-hour training requirements outlined in the Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers.

- An annual training plan is developed by the System which includes both formal and informal training opportunities and utilizes community training resources.
- The training plan is designed to help providers meet the goals identified during their annual accreditation review.

## IV. SERVICES TO PROVIDERS

- A-1. The System offers services and resources to member provider
- The System has a written agreement with providers describing services and resources available, who is eligible for services and resources, and how providers access services and resources.
  - The written materials clearly describe fees charged for services, if any.
  - The system will provide services to assist members in complying with and maintaining Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers.
- A-2. Services and resources are responsive to providers' interests.
- Through annual evaluation, communication with and participation on the Advisory Committee, and other means, providers have opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of services and resources, and to make recommendations to the System for changes.
  - The system will provide support and identify community resources as requested by member providers.
- A-3. Services and resources and are designed to contribute to the providers' professionalism and capacity offer quality care and early education services.

## V. SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

- A-1. The System provides families with a single source of information about services offered by the System and the general services offered by its member providers.
- A-2. The System has a written statement (manual, brochure, etc.) for parents which describes the services offered, the fees charged, policies for providers and families, and procedure for complaints.
- A-3. Through annual evaluation, communication with and participation on the Advisory Committee, and other means, families have opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of services and resources, and to make recommendations to the System for changes.
- A-4. The System has procedures that may be used if a family has a concern or problem with a provider. This procedure includes the following elements:
- Encouragement for families to attempt to resolve the problem directly with the provider.
  - Role of System staff in problem resolution and mediation
  - Role of the director
  - Role of the System Advisory Committee
  - Appeal to the Office of Community Services if attempts to resolve problems internally aren't successful.
- A-5. In cooperation with the Child Care Assistance Coordinator of the Office of Community Services, the System provides enhanced services to families receiving assistance through the City's Child Care Assistance program. The role of the City, System, and Provider are described in Appendix 7.

## **VII. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION**

A-1. The System maintains relationships with related agencies and groups to maximize services to families and providers.

- Communication and cooperation with regulatory agencies such as State Licensing and 4-C Certification staff.
- Involvement in community-wide training and planning efforts, where appropriate.

A-2. The System maintains a visible and active presence in advocacy for quality family child care.

## APPENDIX 1 NON-SECTARIAN PRACTICES

**Provider Requirements:** Sec 3.18(3)(c) 1c-d of the Madison Ordinances requires that there be no religious bias in instructional policies, practices and materials in Madison accredited child care programs. Where a program has employees, the ordinance also requires that all staff be selected on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to religious beliefs or affiliation. *City Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers* Section I.A states that “The Family child care provider complies with Federal, State, County, and City child care regulations related to providing child care.”

**System requirements:** The System’s responsibility for assuring compliance with this ordinance requirement is clarified in *Madison Accreditation Standards for the Administration of Family Child Care Systems*. Section II.A. states that “The family child care System supervises the individual providers within the organization who are or wish to become Madison accredited.” Satellite’s responsibility is further identified in the agency’s contract with the City, which states, “Satellite will provide Madison accreditation to member providers using the Madison Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers.”

1. The application form will include an opportunity for the provider to indicate whether religious policies, practices or materials are incorporated into the program of the family child care home.
2. If the applicant answers in the affirmative to question, the System staff will clarify the requirement of non-sectarian practices in accredited programs. Applications may be accepted only from providers who are willing to follow this requirement during hours of child care.
3. The requirement of non-sectarian policies, practices, materials, and employment will be restated in the System-Provider agreement, which is signed at the time of accreditation or re-accreditation.
4. If the System staff become aware during home visits, consultations and re-accreditation process that a provider is not in compliance with this requirement, the System staff will remind providers of this ordinance requirement.

System staff will make every effort to help providers make needed changes in their programs to maintain compliance with this ordinance requirement.

**APPENDIX 2**  
**MONITORING LICENSING COMPLIANCE**  
**MADISON FAMILY CHILD CARE ACCREDITATION POLICY**

**Provider Requirements:** Sec 3.18(3)(c )1.e-f of the Madison Ordinances requires that accredited family day care programs be in compliance with state licensing rules. *City Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers* Section I.A states that “The Family child care provider complies with Federal, State, County, and City child care regulations related to providing child care.”

**System requirements:** The system’s responsibility for assuring compliance with this ordinance requirement is clarified in *Madison Accreditation Standards for the Administration of Family Child Care Systems*. Section II.A. states that “The family child care system supervises the individual providers within the organization who are or wish to become Madison accredited.” If a System is funded through a contract with the City of Madison, that contract may identify further obligations.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the steps to be completed by the system to monitor the licensing status of Madison accredited family child care homes as a function of the accreditation process.

5. The Family Child Care System will work with State Licensing to establish and maintain a mechanism similar to that used for center accreditation.
6. At the beginning of a provider’s accreditation/re-accreditation process, System staff will contact State Licensing to determine the licensing status of providers who are in process of accreditation or re-accreditation.
7. Where there are licensing violations, System staff will inform providers that compliance with licensing is a requirement of accreditation; failure to address licensing issues can jeopardize their accreditation.
8. No provider may be accredited or re-accredited until outstanding licensing violations have been addressed, as evidenced by a posted correction plan approved by the state licenser.
9. It is not the intent of this policy to require that System staff continually monitor licensing violations. However, as the System Staff becomes aware of licensing violations that occur between accreditations, the System staff will remind providers of the obligation to remain in compliance with licensing requirements. The System staff will follow through on such violations to verify that violations have been rectified.

### **APPENDIX 3 THE ANNUAL RATE SURVEY**

The purpose of this policy is to clarify roles and responsibilities for the participation of Madison-accredited family child care providers and systems in the annual rate survey.

**Requirements of the City:** Sec 3.18(3)(g)4 of the Madison Ordinances outlines in detail the requirement of an annual rate survey to calculate rates for the various types of child care to be funded by the City's child care assistance program. In each case, the rate is calculated based on the rates for all centers and homes in each category. By ordinance, rates are changed effective October 1 of each year. To accomplish this, the City Child Care Assistance Coordinator initiates the rate survey in August.

**Requirements of Providers:** The requirement of participation of all accredited providers in this annual rate survey is outlined in several places. The ordinance cited above states that the City's reimbursement rates for full-time, part-time, preschool, infant-toddler, and school-age care are based on a calculation using the average of **all** City-accredited day care and family child care programs. *Information for City Accredited Family Child Care Providers*, a document which is given to providers in the New Provider packet, states that "The provider must complete and return the City's annual rate review survey." *City Accreditation Standards for Family Child Care Providers* Section I.A states that "The Family child care provider complies with Federal, State, County, and City child care regulations related to providing child care."

**Requirements of the System:** The system's responsibility for assuring compliance with this ordinance requirement is clarified in *Madison Accreditation Standards for the Administration of Family Child Care Systems* Section II.A. states that "The family child care system supervises the individual providers within the organization who are or wish to become Madison accredited." Where the System has a contract with the City, the 's system's responsibility may further be defined in that contract.

#### **Roles and responsibilities:**

System staff visit each provider on a quarterly basis. At the quarterly visits occurring during the period prior to the annual rate survey, staff will remind providers to expect the survey in August. They will also remind providers of the requirement to return the survey. This conversation will be noted on the home visit report.

At least one newsletter article per year in the System newsletter will include information about the annual rate survey. This article should clarify that participation is a requirement of accreditation. It may also mention that participation by family child care providers has historically helped to establish a favorable rate for all programs.

The City Child Care Specialist responsible for accreditation of the system will consult with System staff when changes are being considered to the annual rate survey.

The City Child Care Assistance Coordinator will mail the rate survey to all Madison accredited providers, based on the mailing list supplied by the System. The System will receive a copy of the rate survey at the time that it is mailed to providers.

As is done with child care centers, the Child Care Assistance Coordinator will make one follow-up contact with family child care providers who have not completed the rate survey by the deadline. One week after that follow-up, the Child Care Assistance Coordinator will provide the System staff with a list of providers who have not returned the survey. System staff will contact each provider individually, taking the information over the telephone if necessary, and sending the information to the Child Care Assistance Coordinator. (This parallels the process used for centers, in which the assigned specialist is responsible for assuring compliance of centers with this requirement.)

While it is hoped that the advanced preparation will lead to a high rate of response, providers and centers must ultimately understand that failure to comply with this requirement puts their accreditation in jeopardy.

**APPENDIX 4**  
**PROCESS FOR GRANTING AN EXCEPTION**  
**TO GROUP SIZE AND PROVIDER/CHILD RATIOS**

The City Standards for Accreditation of Family Child Care Providers states that the provider may request an exception to specific standards covering group size and provider/child ratios and that the family child care System may grant an exception to that standard up to numbers set by State Licensing rules. Since family child care accreditation is a contracted service of the City of Madison, final approval of the exception will be granted by the City of Madison Child Care Unit.

The exception procedure is as follows:

1. The provider requests an exception to one or more accreditation standards from the family child care System. The request must be submitted in writing prior to the time the situation is present and the exception is needed. The System is able to consider only those situations covered in the City standards. State Licensing rules must be maintained.
2. The family child care System will consider the exception based on its experience with the provider. The general principles to be followed by the System include:

The provider has shown the capacity over time (at least 1 year) to provide child care which meets city accreditation standards. This is documented in the provider's most recent accreditation materials.

A System staff member has observed the current care situation (provider with children present) and is confident that the provider understands the standards. The child care practices followed in the home reflect quality child care consistent with city standards. The System staff discusses the ramifications of the exception with the provider and documents the conversation including specific parameters or stipulations.

The exception will not at any time jeopardize the health and safety of the children in care.

Each exception is situation specific and not to be generalized to an individual provider over time, or to other providers.

3. The family child care System makes a recommendation regarding the granting or denial of the exception and develops a plan for monitoring the home including a time line for the exception. If the System denies the exception, the provider can appeal the decision through the internal agency appeal process.
4. The System submits the recommendation and plan to the City Child Care Unit. These documents will be sent directly to the Child Care Unit specialist working with the family child care System.

5. The child care specialist will discuss the situation with the System staff working with the provider. The specialist may take additional steps to gather information about the specific situation. This may include but is not limited to reviewing certification documents, observing in the provider's home or interviewing the provider.
6. Within ten working days from the receipt of the request, based on a review of materials, the system recommendation and other information gathered, the City Child Care specialist grants or denies the request for the exception. Documentation of the decision is sent to the family child care system, Community Services Supervisor and the System certification file. The City Child Care Unit can stipulate specific parameters for the granting of the exception. The city reserves the right to return to the home from time to time to insure the maintenance of quality.
7. The Community Services Supervisor will hear an appeal from the family child care system regarding a denial of the exception. The process is as follows:
  - A. Within 10 working days from notification of the denial for the exception, the family child care system communicates in writing its appeal to the Community Services Supervisor.
  - B. The Community Services Supervisor will consider the appeal, make a final determination and notify the system in writing within 30 calendar days from receiving the appeal. This decision is binding. Documentation will be filed in the family child care accreditation file.

## **APPENDIX 5 OVERNIGHT CHILD CARE**

### **I. Provider Requirements**

1. Individual providers may be specifically accredited for overnight child care. Overnight care will be done only in the accredited provider's home/center. Providers will meet the Madison Standards of Accreditation for Family Child Care Providers. In addition to the meeting the Madison standards and the membership requirements of the family child care system, the provider will be required to meet the following stipulations:
  1. Every provider caring for 1-8 children will be Wisconsin State Licensed as a family child care provider.
  2. A provider may care for children a maximum of 12 hours in any 24 hour period. Although not prohibited, working a second job outside of care hours may impact a provider's ability to be accredited (i.e. sleeping schedule, physical capacity).
  3. Children will be cared for a maximum of 12 hours in any 24 hour period.
  4. Children must be under adult supervision at all times.
    - The provider or an adult substitute who meets the applicable Madison standards must be present at all times. No person under 18 years may be left in sole charge of the children.
    - A written plan for the supervision of children throughout the night will be created (i.e. electronic monitoring, checking on children, other adults in home, provision for substitute care, quarterly parent-provider discussion).
  5. Children may share a room with other children. Children may not share a room with adults.
  6. Each child shall have their own crib, bed or cot. Bedding is child specific until laundered.
  7. The program for children shall be suitable to the time of day the children are in care. Appropriate materials and equipment need to be available to children during their waking hours; activities and routines shall compliment the child's daily schedule.
  8. Emphasis will be placed on parent/provider communication to ensure adequate exchange of information of children's needs and the care situation. Quarterly discussions (in person, on phone) between parent and provider will be scheduled. Specific agreements will be documented as part of the parent-provider agreement (i.e. written plan of supervision).

## **II. Family Child Care System Requirements**

The system will accredit providers for family child care during evening, nighttime and early morning hours. This will require system staff observing and meeting with providers during those hours of care. Because over night care will have strong ties with the provider's own family and home, the accreditation process will require sensitivity on the part of the System staff and a willingness to meet standards on the part of the provider.

1. The basic areas of the standards will be considered in determining accreditation status: organization of the family child care home and business, program policies, interactional setting and the physical environment. Additional stipulations for providers have been outlined in **Over Night Care, I. Provider Requirements.**
2. Regular requirements and processes will be followed by the System staff during the accreditation process. As with any provider accreditation, the System staff will rely on written policy, information given in the accreditation packet, provider integrity, parent reports, conversations and observations in determining whether a provider meets standards. Observations of the family child care home by the family child care System staff will take place during hours of care. System staff may observe during drop-off/pick-up times, meals, transitions to bed or waking up and while children are sleeping. The System staff may use drop-in visits to monitor the family child care home.
4. If safety concerns regarding a specific neighborhood or provider arise, the family child care system will contact the City Child Care Unit to discuss possible city supports to ensure safety of System staff during nighttime visits ( i.e. contact with neighborhood resource teams, community centers, police department, neighborhood security agencies.)
5. Respite care will not be provided for care offered during evening or nighttime hours.

## **APPENDIX 6 ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATES PROCESS**

The certificates for Madison Accreditation of Family Child Care providers will state the provider's name and the hours for which the certificate is valid. The certificate will be signed by the Director of the Family Child Care System, the System staff working with the provider during the accreditation process and the Community Services Supervisor of the City of Madison.

The process to obtain the signature of the Community Services Supervisor is as follows:

1. On a monthly basis the family child care system will submit certificates for the signature to the City Child Care Unit specialist working with the system. Submission of certificates should coincide with the completion of the accreditation process. The certificates must have the name of the provider, the period of valid accreditation, the signature of the director of the family child care system and the signature of the System staff already on the certificate.
2. The OCS staff will generate a letter of congratulations for every certificate submitted. The child care specialist working with the system will sign this letter.
3. The certificate will be given to the OCS supervisor for signing. After the certificate is signed, the OCS Program Assistant will make one copy of each letter and one copy of the certificate.
4. The original signed letter and the certificate will be sent to the FCC provider by the OCS staff. A copy of each letter and a copy of each certificate will be sent to the FCC system for its files (with a cover letter to the system). A copy of each provider letter and certificate (along with a copy of the cover letter) will be filed in the OCS vault.
5. Certificates will be printed by the Office of Community Services. The family child care system will inform the OCS Program Assistant when additional certificates are needed.

**Appendix 7**  
**CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES**  
**CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
**Information for City Accredited Family Child Care Providers**

**What is the City's Child Care Assistance Program?**

The City of Madison's Child Care Assistance Program pays child care costs on a sliding fee scale for low-income families who qualify for funding. Program criteria are detailed below.

**Who is Eligible for Child Care Assistance?**

To be eligible, families must have resided at least six months in the City of Madison. They must also qualify based on the City's income guidelines. Families whose incomes are above the income guidelines pay a portion of their child care expenses. This portion is called a family share.

City assistance is only for families who are not eligible for other child care assistance programs such as the Wisconsin Child Care Subsidy Program (W2).

Parent must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. be employed or looking for work; or
2. be enrolled in school or a training program; or
3. have special needs (i.e., family stress, child developmental problems, etc.).

**What is the difference between the City and County Programs?**

City families must use only a City accredited provider. County families may use City accredited, State licensed and County registered providers.

The City's income guidelines and child care rates differ from the County.

**How are the City's Rates Determined?**

The City's child care rates are based on the average of rates charged by City accredited centers and home care providers. An annual survey is completed in late summer with resulting rate changes implemented in October. The City will notify providers of rate changes.

City accredited programs must establish a fee schedule for child care services. If the provider's rate is above the City's maximum rates, the family will be responsible to pay the difference between the City and provider rates. Providers who charge rates that are lower than the City's maximum rates will be paid at the lower rate.

Providers are required to charge the same rate to City families as non-City families. In the case where there is a sliding fee scale offered to the public, the City will pay the scale's highest rate up to the City's maximum rate.

## **PROVIDER-PARENT CONTRACT**

### **Payment of Vacation and other Benefits**

The City will be guided by the terms of the written, signed provider-parent contract regarding payment of vacations, sick leave benefits, holding fees, etc. The City will pay no more than its maximum rates for basic child care. The City can pay only one child care provider at a time. If alternate care is required, the City will pay one provider for the same time period.

### **What Documents should the Provider Receive?**

A Tuition Aid Authorization form giving formal notice of payment will be issued to eligible families. The provider will receive a copy of the form. The Tuition Aid Authorization form includes: names of the child and parent, beginning date of eligibility or effective date of change, number of days eligible for care, City's payment rate, parent's family share, termination dates, and comments.

Any increase or decrease in care will require another authorization form.

### **How will the Provider be Paid?**

The City will mail a billing statement for child care providers and centers every four weeks (not once a month). There will be 13 billing statements in a calendar year. A file copy will be included for the provider's use.

The provider should review the billing statement for accuracy, make adjustments if necessary (i.e., wrong rate or addition of authorized child care, etc.), sign and return the statement for payment. The City will review the returned statement for adjustments, and forward the statement to the City Accounting Office which will issue the check directly to the provider.

In the first billing period, providers will be paid for the actual number of days of care provided to new families. Subsequent billing periods will pay for four weeks of care.

### **When can the Provider Expect Payment?**

The provider can expect payment about two weeks after the ending date of the statement. The directions at the bottom of the billing statement inform the provider of the scheduled payment date. Late statements are paid as City Accounting can make accommodations.

It is possible for a provider to arrange to pick up the check. Please write this request across the top of the billing statement. City Accounting will hold the check and notify the provider when the check is ready.

### **What are the Family's Responsibilities?**

1. Each family is required to submit income verification when requested by this office. Continuing income eligibility is reviewed for every family on a semi-annual basis.
2. Families must notify the City of any change of address, income or occupation.
3. Families with a family share must pay that share directly to the child care provider. Families are responsible to pay to the child care provider any rate difference between the City's maximum rate and the provider's actual rate.
4. Families must give the child care program two weeks' notice when discontinuing care.

### **What are the Provider's Responsibilities?**

1. In order to receive City child care assistance, the provider must maintain City accreditation.

2. The provider must complete and sign a contract with the parent regarding the terms of the child care being provided. The parent must receive a signed copy of the contract.
3. The provider must report the following to the City:
  - a. acceptance of a family for child care
  - b. beginning date of care
  - c. rate being charged
  - d. attendance problems or failure to use care for three consecutive days.
  - e. changes affecting child care assistance (i.e., decreased or increased hours of care, transfer to another child care provider, etc.)
  - f. care not provided (i.e., program vacation days, substitute care by another City accredited program, etc.)
4. The provider must submit accurate bills.
5. The provider must complete and return the City's annual rate review survey.

The City appreciates the facilitative and supportive role that providers have given to the City and its families. The providers' advocacy has been instrumental in working through some difficult situations.

**What are the Family Day Care System's Responsibilities?**

1. The family day care system refers City families to City accredited providers.
2. The family day care system ensures that providers are meeting City accreditation standards.
3. It is the system's responsibility to mediate child care concerns and issues with parents and providers.

**What are the City's Responsibilities?**

1. The City determines a family's eligibility for the City Child Care Assistance Program.
2. The City monitors continuing eligibility (income reviews, revised school schedules, etc.)
3. The City makes regular payments.
4. The City is required to give two weeks' notice to the family (and provider) concerning discontinuance or rate changes.

**Where does the Provider go with Problems?**

Providers who have child care concerns and issues should first contact the family child care system for support and assistance. Family child care system staff should contact the assigned child care specialist at the Office of Community Services for problem-solving and additional support services if needed.

The provider should contact the City Child Care Assistance Coordinator concerning problems and questions in the area of financial payment and other problems with the City Child Care Assistance Program.

We want to work in a positive, cooperative way to maintain a quality child care service for families. Please feel free to call with questions.

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