STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Connecticut Administered State-Funded Program

General Policy B-03

Eligibility for program enrollment including income, residency and work

 X OEC Child Day Care Contractors
 X OEC Competitive School Readiness
 X OEC Priority School Readiness Districts
___ OEC State Head Start Supplement
 X OEC Smart Start

DEFINITIONS

"Family" is:

1. A parent(s), a parent's spouse, and their minor children who reside together.

2. A parent is a person of majority age who has legally ben granted "in loco parentis" status or who is a child's parent by blood, marriage or adoption.

3. Additionally, **for School Readiness**, parents who pay more than half the support of their minor child(ren) living with another family, <u>as reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at their last annual IRS filing</u>, may include such child(ren) as a member of their family (i.e., family size) for determining the family's fee.

4. A child for whom Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) is received, living with a supervising relative for whom no TFA is provided. Such a child shall be considered as a family of one.

5. A child in foster care authorized by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Such a child shall be considered a family of one.

For Child Day Care

"Enrolled" shall mean the contractor has determined:

1. The family is eligible for program services
2. The child has been scheduled to attend the program.

3. In the reporting period in which said child was scheduled to attend the program, the child attended at least one calendar day, and

4. The child shall be deemed to remain enrolled so long as:

    a. Neither the contractor nor the family member terminate the child's enrollment and
    b. The child attends at least one calendar day in each reporting period, or
    c. The child does not attend at least one calendar day but the contractor holds the slot for the child and the family pays the established weekly fee for the slot.

POLICY

Income Eligibility

Child Day Care

Programs shall enroll families whole gross income is less than 75% of the state's median income guideline. The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) shall notify the contractor, in writing, of the state's median income guidelines. When a family's gross income reaches or exceeds the 75% state median income level, the family's currently enrolled child(ren) may remain in the program so long as the
family pays the applicable fees and remains eligible under all other conditions. If a family's gross income exceeds 100% of the state median income, programs will consult with the Child Day Care Program Manager regarding continuing eligibility and applicable fees.

Programs shall determine family income eligibility before enrollment and will re-determine per child fees at least annually thereafter. The contractor shall also require families to report changes in gross family income of fifty dollars or more per week and shall be required to re-determine per child fees based on and following receipt of the reported changes.

Federal funding that partially supports the Child Day Care Contracts requires that families enrolled meet the threshold of income below 200% of the federal poverty level. Information reported on the PSR reporting family size and income allows the OEC to monitor enrollment of families falling below 200% of the federal poverty level and to ensure compliance with the federal funding requirements.

School Readiness

Sixty percent (60%) of enrolled School Readiness families must fall below 75% of the state median income.

Smart Start

Smart Start programs may allocate at least 60% of the spaces to children who are members of families that are at or below 75% of the state median income, or 50% of the spaces to children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches. Smart Start programs MUST allocate spaces as presented in their applications for funding.

Residency Requirements

Child Day Care

Programs shall limit the provision of services to families who reside in the state of Connecticut, except that families who reside in the states of Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island who work in Connecticut and receive a child care subsidy from their state of resident which may be used in Connecticut, may receive services under the Child Day Care Contract.

School Readiness

The local School Readiness Council (SRC) shall establish a written policy regarding whether to allow sub-grantee school readiness programs to enroll non-resident children. Please refer to GP C-06 School Readiness Non-Residency Option.

Smart Start

Students enrolled in a Smart Start Classroom must be residents of the town(s) served by the local or regional board of education. Proof of residency is required for enrollment.

Work Requirements

Child Day Care

Of the families enrolled under the Child Day Care Contract, 80% of enrolled children's families shall be earning income through employment. If a family's work status changes, programs can continue to provide services if:

1. The family can be included in the 20% of families not required to be earning income through employment.

2. The program may enter into an agreement with the family regarding their efforts to find work and/or enter into a training or education program with an ultimate goal of employment. It will be the programs responsibility to set expectations regarding documentation and follow-up as to adherence to this agreement.

School Readiness

There are no requirements regarding work status.

Smart Start

There are no requirements regarding work status.

Circumstances Outside of this Policy Statement

When cases arise that do not fit into the circumstances described within this policy, programs, liaisons, and/or contractors should contact the appropriate Program Manager for individual guidance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILD DAY CARE CONTRACTORS AND SCHOOL READINESS COUNCILS

Child Day Care contractors and/or SRC's are responsible for ensuring that the practices and policies related to enrollment and eligibility are followed by all sub-grantees and sub-contractors.

For further information concerning this GENERAL POLICY please contact the OEC program manager. If you're not sure who that is, visit: https://www.ctoec.org/contact-us/