



Subsidy Parent Guide

Investing in our community, one family at a time

This guide is being revised, please contact your Family Support Specialist if you have questions or concerns about your family's services.



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ABOUT SNCS

What is SNCS?

Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) is a private, community-based nonprofit childcare resource and referral agency that has served families, early care and education professionals and the community since 1978. We have 3 offices in Nevada and Sierra Counties – Grass Valley, Truckee, and Loyalton.

SNCS Mission Statement

Sierra Nevada Children's Services enriches the community by supporting quality child care and empowering families to aspire to life-long success.

SNCS Vision Statement

We provide the bridge between state dependence and self-sufficiency, resulting in families contributing to the community through economic success and growth. This is done by ensuring child care, which reduces barriers to employment and enables more people to work, creating economic expansion.

Non-Discrimination Clause

SNCS operates on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, color, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ethnicity.

Confidentiality

SNCS policy regarding confidentiality states that the use or disclosure of information pertaining to the child or the child's family is restricted to purposes directly related to the administration of the program. The use or disclosure of information will be limited to SNCS staff and authorized representatives of the funding sources or, in the event of a licensing investigation, Community Care Licensing. Information may also be shared with the Department of Social Services regarding CalWORKs families, or the District Attorney's office for fraud cases.

Except in the aforementioned instances, information shall not be released without prior written acknowledgment of the enrolled parent or childcare provider, unless a court order is issued to SNCS.

SNCS permits the review of information regarding the child by the custodial parent(s) or those with the legal right to know, upon request and at reasonable times and places.

SNCS PROGRAMS

Supportive Child Care

SNCS administers various programs that are funded by federal, state and local governments to help income eligible families pay for part, or all of their childcare costs. Families may also pay a share of cost on a sliding scale that is based on income and family size.

Childcare Referrals

SNCS is funded by the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide Resource & Referral services to Nevada and Sierra counties. SNCS provides free childcare referrals to anyone in the community, regardless of income. SNCS maintains current information on all licensed family childcare providers and licensed childcare centers in Nevada and Sierra counties.

When a parent calls looking for child care, SNCS gathers some basic information from the parent to best match the family's needs to a list of childcare providers. SNCS staff is available to answer questions about how to find quality child care. SNCS believes the parent is the best person to choose the care for the child. It is SNCS goal to help parents make informed choices from a broad range of childcare options that meet the family's needs.

Additionally, when providing childcare referrals SNCS staff informs parents that they have the right to view information about a licensed childcare provider (Family Childcare Home or Childcare Center) either at the childcare provider's location or by contacting Community Care Licensing (CCL) (Oliver's Law, January 2000). The purpose of this law is to empower and inform parents and guardians who need childcare services; to encourage parents to review the safety of the childcare program or facility; and to encourage parents to evaluate the program's ability to meet the needs of their child. To obtain information regarding a childcare provider, you can call CCL at (916)

263-5744 (Nevada County) or (530) 895-5033 (Sierra County) or online at <https://secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/>.

SNCS does not inspect or monitor the conditions of a childcare provider's facility or the quality of care children received, unless the facility is a licensed Family Child Care Home Education Network provider. SNCS does not assume any responsibility for injury or damages arising from the performance of our agreement of services. Providers and parents agree to indemnify and hold harmless SNCS, its officers and its employees from costs, suit or liability allegedly arising from the provision of childcare services.

Resources

SNCS provides a family-friendly environment where parents can utilize a variety of resources while their children play nearby.

In addition, SNCS is partnered with other agencies in the community that provide family services. SNCS staff can provide referrals to agencies who can assist with services such as housing, food, education, legal services, and employment.

Child Development Lending Library

SNCS has child development resources available for both parents and childcare providers. All 3 of our offices have a Child Development Lending Library that includes developmentally appropriate toys, books, and games for children of different ages. The Lending Library also contains educational books and videos to assist both parents and childcare providers in caring for and raising children. The resources range from parenting guidance to information on how to successfully operate a family childcare home or childcare center.

Workshops & Trainings

SNCS offers training workshops throughout the year for childcare providers, as well as other various learning opportunities for childcare providers and parents. The monthly schedule is posted in the main lobby in our Grass Valley office as well as on the SNCS website.

Parent Advisory Committee

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is open to all parents. Parents have the opportunity to share information with and advise SNCS staff on issues related to services to families and children.

CHILD CARE OPTIONS

Licensed Child Care

All licensed childcare providers are regulated by Community Care Licensing (CCL), a division of California Department of Social Services. Legislation requires at least one unannounced site visit every 3 years; however, annual comprehensive visits are made to those sites with previous violations or serious complaints. Licensed childcare providers, upon request, must provide a copy of a valid license issued by CCL. Copies of all visits by CCL are required to be available for review at the site by potential or currently enrolled families. Licensed childcare providers are fingerprinted, and have passed a criminal background check and cleared the California Child Abuse Index. Licensed childcare providers are required to charge rates for subsidized children that are less than or equal to the rates charged for nonsubsidized children.

- **Childcare Center**
A licensed facility that provides childcare services for a number of children. Each center's license indicates the number and age groups of children the center may serve. Centers are licensed to serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-aged children or some combination of these age groups. A childcare program that is staffed by school district employees for school age children on a school site is considered a childcare center for purposes of subsidized reimbursement, but are exempt from licensing.
- **Family Childcare Home**
A family childcare home is a private home which has been licensed for the occupant to provide childcare services. There are two types of homes: those licensed for six or eight children (small) and those licensed for twelve or fourteen children (large). In both cases, the license states the number and ages of children that may be served. Anyone who lives in the home and is over 18 years of age must pass

a criminal background check and clear the California Child Abuse Index.

- **Family Child Care Home Education Network**

A family child care home that has joined a select group of family child care home providers known as the “Network”. A Network provider participates in ongoing training, professional development, and technical assistance to enhance and maintain professional care in a quality home environment. A Network provider is dedicated to providing comprehensive and developmentally appropriate child learning opportunities, and must meet additional requirements beyond basic CCL requirements. Families enrolled under Network funding receive information on the developmental progress of their child, and are supported through a partnership between the family, the provider, and the SNCS Education Director. *See *Funding Options: Family Child Care Home Education Network*

Open Door Policy

All licensed child care providers are required to maintain an Open Door Policy in that parents have the right to visit their child’s programs anytime during operating hours and are encouraged to participate in activities whenever possible.

License Exempt Care

License-exempt care occurs when an individual provides care for the children of one family other than his/her own. License-exempt providers must be at least 18 years of age and will be required to complete an EMSA approved Pediatric CPR/First Aid class within 90 days of the license-exempt provider’s service start date. Parents, legal guardians, or members of the child’s assistance unit are not eligible for reimbursement, nor are individuals currently on probationary status with CCL. Additionally, license-exempt providers must meet with SNCS staff to review participation requirements and complete enrollment paperwork prior to authorization of services. There are 2 types of license-exempt childcare providers.

- **Relative Care**

An individual that qualifies as a relative care provider is an aunt, uncle, grandmother, or grandfather of the child, by blood, marriage, or court decree.

- **TrustLine Care**

An individual who does not qualify for Relative Care must be TrustLine registered to receive reimbursement. TrustLine is the California registry of childcare providers who have passed a background screening. A TrustLine provider is cleared through a fingerprint check of records at the California Department of Justice. SNCS will not enroll or pay any provider until they have been registered on TrustLine. For families enrolled on CalWORKs Stage 1, the provider must first complete and submit all SNCS provider enrollment paperwork, a TrustLine application, and fingerprints. Once cleared, the provider may be eligible for retroactive payment up to 120 days between the date the provider submitted SNCS paperwork through the date the provider was TrustLine registered.

- **Provisional Childcare Provider**

Parents who have an immediate need for child care (those who are working, participating in a CalWORKs work activity, training, or are incapacitated) and are unable to find a licensed or relative provider, who can accommodate their childcare need, have the option to select a provisional childcare provider. For families enrolled on CalWORKs Stage 2, Stage 3, and CAPP, the parent must sign a Provisional Child Care Declaration. The provisional childcare provider must first complete and submit all SNCS provider enrollment paperwork, a TrustLine application, and fingerprints. A provisional provider may only be used for a period of 30 days and must be TrustLine registered within 30 days to be eligible for reimbursement. A provisional provider may be eligible for retroactive reimbursement up to 30 days between the date the provider submitted SNCS paperwork and the date they were cleared and TrustLine registered. A provisional provider who is not TrustLine registered within 30 days will not be eligible for reimbursement until they have been registered on TrustLine.

In-Home Child Care

Child care that takes place in the child's home with a license-exempt provider is referred to as in-home child care. If child care occurs in the child's home the parent is the provider's employer and is responsible for complying with state and federal laws, which includes meeting minimum wage requirements and providing Worker's Compensation Insurance. More information on in-home care is available from SNCS staff.

Choosing Quality Childcare

Early Quality Matters (EQM) is a region-wide program, under the state-wide Quality Counts California system, for all licensed family child care, child care centers, and alternative sites serving children birth to age five. Not all childcare providers participate in EQM. Providers participating in EQM are committed to improving the level of quality early care and education settings. EQM providers commit to ongoing professional development training, mentoring, coaching, program assessments, and accountability. EQM providers are dedicated to improving quality program environments, teacher-child interactions, and child learning outcomes. Childcare providers who participate in EQM have received or may be in the process of receiving a state recognized quality rating.

Prior to selecting a childcare provider, it is recommended that the parent and child visit various childcare provider sites to gain more information about the childcare provider and the environment. It is important to ask questions about the childcare provider, the program and activities, the indoor and outdoor environments, and parent/child expectations.

Please visit SNCS website at www.sncs.org for more tools to help you find quality child care that meets the needs of your family. More information on the statewide program can be found at www.qualitycountsca.net

FUNDING OPTIONS

There are two ways a family may be enrolled for supportive childcare services – from the Childcare Eligibility List or through a CalWORKs referral.

Childcare Eligibility List (CEL)

The Nevada and Sierra County CEL gives families access to two funding sources: the California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP) and the Family Child Care Homes Education Network (FCCHEN) program. An application may be obtained by contacting any of the SNCS offices or on our website, www.sncs.org.

SNCS child care payment assistance programs provide full or partial payment for childcare services for enrolled families. These programs are designed to assist income eligible families in paying for child care. Funding is provided by the California Department of Education (CDE), Early Education and Support Division (EESD).

Families who need subsidized childcare services must complete and submit an application. Applications are entered into the CEL database. Each family is assigned an eligibility rank between 1 and 70, with a lower number indicating a higher likelihood of admission.

Priority for enrollment is based on factors determined by CDE guidelines. A family's rank is determined by the size of the family and the family's gross monthly income. Children who are receiving child protective services or children who are at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited shall be given precedence in the admission process. Families at the lowest rank are the next to be enrolled. It is important to note that the CEL is not administered on a first-come, first-served basis; the amount of time a family has waited does not have any impact on a family's rank.

When funds become available to enroll new families, SNCS pulls a current CEL listing ordered by rank and contacts families by mail, email, and/or phone for possible enrollment. Enrollment is prioritized by rank with the lowest ranked families enrolled first. The family's current eligibility is determined to see if they are still the most eligible for enrollment at that time. There are 2 sources of funding for which families may be eligible:

- **California Alternative Payment Program**

The California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP) helps pay childcare costs for income-eligible families. Families are enrolled in CAPP funding from the CEL, in order of priority, when funding is available. Families may select the childcare provider of their choice (including providers who provide religious instruction).

- **Family Child Care Home Education Network**

Families are enrolled in the Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) program from the CEL, in order of priority when funding is available. SNCS assists families enrolled in the Network program to select a Network childcare provider based on a number of factors.

Children enrolled under Network funding are assessed through the Desired Results for Children and Families system, using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). The DRDP assessment system is designed to encourage progress toward the achievement of desired outcomes by providing families and providers with information and technical assistance to support the individual child's progress and improve program quality. Desired outcomes for children and families include social competence, effective learning, physical and motor competence, health and nutrition, safe environments, and progress towards achievement of goals.

One major purpose of the Network is to train and support family childcare providers in providing professional care in a quality environment. The Network aims to ensure that parents are provided information on the development of their child(ren) and are afforded an effective method of communication between themselves, providers, and SNCS staff. Parents complete an annual survey, and have a conference with SNCS staff at least twice a year. Developmental profiles are completed on each child twice a year to ensure that they are meeting developmental milestones. A progress report is then generated from the information gathered and shared with parents and providers to ensure that developmental needs are being met.

As a participant in the Network, parents have the opportunity and are encouraged to join the SNCS Parent Advisory Committee. Parents or caregivers interested in joining the committee should contact the SNCS Education Director.

Network childcare providers commit to ongoing professional development, and receive training on a variety of topics related to quality care in working with infants, toddlers, young children, and quality learning environments. They also provide ongoing support to parents who have concerns re: feeding, sleeping, and issues surrounding general development. Childcare providers maintain and enhance quality childcare services, guided by annual program

assessments that focus on the environment, childcare routines, nutrition, and activities to support child development and the quality of the relationship with the families that are served. The assessment is completed by the childcare provider and SNCS staff.

Note: Children enrolled in the Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) are only eligible to receive services when they are enrolled with a Family Childcare provider who participates in the Network. If a provider is removed from the Network, the families who use that provider will be given referrals to other providers who are still in the Network. All Network providers are prohibited from providing religious instruction.

CalWORKs

California's version of welfare reform is the CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) program. CalWORKs has many family support services, including child care. Child care through CalWORKs is a 3-stage program that pays child care expenses for eligible CalWORKs participants. Families eligible for CalWORKs funding must be referred to SNCS by the CalWORKs office.

- **Stage 1**

Eligibility for Stage 1 child care is determined by staff at CalWORKs. A referral is faxed to SNCS authorizing childcare services. When it is determined by the CalWORKs office that the family's situation is stable, a referral is made to SNCS to transfer childcare funding from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

- **Stage 2 (C2AP)**

CalWORKs Stage 2 is available for 24 months after the family becomes ineligible for cash aid; however, eligibility requirements must be met. Eligibility is determined by SNCS staff.

- **Stage 3 (C3AP)**

If a family is currently enrolled on Stage 2 their child care will be transitioned to Stage 3 24 months after the family becomes ineligible for cash aid. Stage 3 may continue as long as the family maintains eligibility for services.

Other Funding Options

Please contact our Resource & Referral department for more information regarding funding options administered by agencies other than SNCS (Head Start/Early Head Start partnerships, California State Preschool, etc.).

RECEIVING CHILD CARE SERVICES

SNCS administers services that are funded by federal, state, and local governments. Different funding sources may have different rules and regulations. Therefore, it is possible for two families that are receiving services to have different rules applied to their cases.

Enrollment

A family is enrolled for services based on eligibility status and need for services. In order to successfully complete enrollment a family must do the following:

- Provide all documentation required to establish eligibility and need for services.
- Meet with a Family Support Specialist for an eligibility assessment.
- Attend an enrollment appointment and view an orientation of program requirements.
- Select a childcare provider that is enrolled for participation.

Child care services shall be approved to begin once the parent has attended an enrollment appointment, viewed an orientation, completed and signed the application for services (CD9600), and provided all requested documentation. If all of the requirements are met within 30 days from the date the parent signed the application for services, the family will receive a Notice of Action (NOA) approving services. If requirements are not met within 30 days, the parent will receive a NOA denying services. If the parent disagrees with the agency's decision to deny services, the parent may appeal by completing the reverse side of the NOA or making a verbal request. If the parent makes a verbal request for an appeal, a written statement will be completed at the time of the hearing. All appeals must be submitted to SNCS no later than the appeal date shown on the NOA.

Eligibility Status

Families must meet one of the following requirements in order to be eligible for childcare services. The eligibility criteria are: Child Protective Services or At-Risk, Current Aid Recipient, Homeless, and Income Eligible.

- **Child Protective Services or At-Risk**
If eligibility is based on a referral from CPS or another licensed professional the family shall meet eligibility requirements for no less than 12 months.
- **Current Aid Recipient**
Parents who are currently receiving cash aid are eligible for services as a current aid recipient, and these families are required to submit documentation of their current public cash assistance in order to meet Cash Aid eligibility requirements. Families who are eligible for services as current aid recipients shall meet eligibility requirements for no less than 12 months.
- **Homeless**
Families may be eligible for services if they are homeless based upon a referral from a legal, medical, or social services agency, a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, a Head Start program, or an emergency or transitional shelter. Families who are eligible for services due to homelessness shall meet eligibility requirements for no less than 12 months.
- **Income Eligible**
The family's adjusted gross monthly income (total income minus verified child support payments) must be at or below 70% of the State Median Income (SMI) at the time of enrollment to meet income eligibility requirements. For all countable sources of income please refer to Appendix I. Families are required to report all income received the month prior to enrollment, both countable and non-countable, and/or documentation of current and ongoing income. Families with \$0 income must provide a written declaration, under penalty of perjury, indicating the periods of time and the reasons for no income, including an explanation of how the family is living on no income.

Families who are income eligible shall meet eligibility requirements for no less than 12 months, or until income exceeds 85% of the State Median Income, adjusted for family size.

Income is calculated using gross monthly income that may be "fixed" or "fluctuating." Income is fixed if it stays the same from

month to month. Income is fluctuating if it varies because of overtime, variable hours, seasonal employment, commissions, tips, self-employment, etc.

Verification of a family's income shall be required annually for recertification purposes.

Families who are eligible to enroll based upon their income must report if their income exceeds 85% of the State Median Income (SMI), adjusted for family size, within 30 calendar days. The SMI for your family size can be found on your Income Determination Form, by contacting your Family Support Specialist, or in Appendix II of this guide.

Need for Services

In addition to meeting one of the eligibility requirements, the parent must have a need for childcare services. At any time during the initial certification or recertification period a parent may voluntarily request an increase to their certified child care schedule based on documentation of employment or another basis for need, as applicable. The need criteria are: employment, seeking employment, vocational training, parental incapacity, seeking permanent housing, CPS, or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- **Employment**

If the basis of need for services is employment the parent must submit documentation of the days and hours of employment. If the parent has an employer the parent must request that the employer complete verification of employment. The information that is submitted to SNCS will be independently verified by a Family Support Specialist.

If the parent is self-employed, the parent must provide the following documentation to demonstrate a need for services:

- A declaration of need under penalty of perjury that includes a description of the employment and an estimate of the days and hours worked per week.
- To demonstrate the days and hours of work the parent must provide a copy of one or more of the following: appointment logs, client receipts, job logs, mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, or similar records.
- If applicable, a copy of a business license, workspace lease, or workspace rental agreement.

SNCS may request additional information if the documentation submitted by the parent is not sufficient to verify employment. Upon initial certification or recertification families shall be certified for services for not less than twelve (12) months. Families are considered to meet the eligibility and/or need requirements for not less than twelve (12) months before having the family's eligibility or need recertified.

- **Seeking Employment**

If a parent's need for services is to look for employment an agreement to seek employment must be signed prior to using child care. This agreement must include the following:

- The plan to secure employment.
- The days and hours child care is needed.

The period of eligibility for seeking employment is not less than twelve (12) months. Services shall be approved for no more than 5 days per week and fewer than 30 hours per week.

Services for seeking employment will be authorized on a case-by-case basis for parents of school-age children or two-parent families in which both parents are seeking employment. Since this is a part-time benefit, if both parents are requesting services for seeking employment, care can only be authorized to the extent that the parents cannot take turns caring for the child(ren) while the other person seeks employment. Parent(s) of school-age children must demonstrate a need to seek employment that cannot be met during the hours the child is enrolled in school.

- **Vocational Training**

If the parent's need for services is vocational training leading directly to a recognized trade or profession, services may be authorized for class time (including online courses) and study time.

Eligibility for child care while attending school or a training program is for a period of 6 years from the first date of services as a student (even if services are not used continuously). If the parent has or receives a Bachelor's Degree child care is limited to the first 24 semester units taken after receiving the Bachelor's Degree, not to exceed the 6-year limit.

The period of eligibility for vocational training is for not less than 12 months. Ongoing eligibility for services based on training is contingent upon making adequate progress. At recertification the parent shall provide documentation of adequate progress from the most recently completed quarter, semester, or training period. Adequate progress is defined as earning a grade point average of 2.0 or higher; or in a non-graded program, passing the program's requirements in at least 50% of the classes or meeting the training institution's standard for making adequate progress. Students dropping below these minimum standards will be allowed one recertification period to improve. At the conclusion of this eligibility period the parent shall have made adequate progress (as defined above) in order to be recertified for services based on vocational training. If adequate progress is not met, the family shall be disenrolled and services based on vocational training are only available to the parent 6 months after the date of disenrollment.

- **Parental Incapacity**

A parent may receive childcare services if the parent is incapable of providing care and supervision for a child for part of the day due to a physical or mental health condition. The parent will be required to provide a signed statement from a legally qualified health professional to verify that the parent is incapacitated and requires childcare services. Child care shall not exceed 50 hours per week. The period of eligibility when the need for services is incapacitation is for not less than 12 months.

- **Seeking Permanent Housing**

If a parent's need for childcare services is to seek permanent housing for family stability, the parent's period of eligibility at initial certification or recertification shall be no less than 12 months. Services shall occur no more than five days per week and for less than 30 hours per week. During the period of authorization, parents will be requested to provide a written declaration signed under penalty of perjury, describing the search plan to secure a fixed, regular, and adequate residence and shall identify a general description of when services will be necessary. If the family is residing in a shelter, services may also be provided while the parent attends appointments or activities necessary to comply with shelter participation requirements. Parents requesting services to seek permanent housing must meet EESD's definition of homeless. "Homeless" is defined as a person or family that lacks a fixed,

regular, and adequate night-time residence, and has a primary night time residence that is a supervised or privately operated shelter, transitional housing, or home support program designed to provide temporary living accommodations; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

- **Child Protective Services (CPS)/At Risk**

First priority for enrollment from the CEL shall be given to neglected or abused children who are recipients of child protective services, or children who are at risk of being neglected or abused, upon written referral from a legal, medical, or social services agency.

- **CPS**

A family may receive childcare services no less than 12months on the basis of a certification by CPS. The time limit may be extended if the family's childcare referral is recertified by CPS. These families may be exempt from assessment of family fees for up to 12 months and do not need to meet income eligibility requirements upon the recommendation of the county social worker.

- **At Risk**

A family may receive childcare services for no less than 12 months based on certification that the children are at risk of being neglected or abused. A written referral from a legal, medical or social services agency is required. These families may be exempt from assessment of family fees for up to 12 months, upon the recommendation of the referring source.

Assets

A family is not eligible to receive subsidized child care and development services if their family assets exceed \$1,000,000.

Family Size

Families must provide documentation to support the number of children and parents in the household. When only one parent has signed the application for services and the information provided indicates the child in the family has another parent whose name does not appear on the application, then the enrolled parent must self-certify single parent status, under penalty of perjury, on the application for services (CD 9600). If family size fluctuates due

to shared custody the child will only be included in the family size when the child is in the custody of the enrolled parent. Children under the age of 18 who are part of the household and are not receiving services will still be included in the family size. High School students who have turned 18, but have been continuously enrolled in school, may be included in the family size until they have completed high school. The parent will be required to submit documentation of continuous enrollment for the 18-year-old adult child to be included in the family size.

Notification of Changes

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify SNCS within 30 calendar days if their income exceeds 85% of the State Median Income, adjusted for family size, if eligibility for services is based upon the family's income. A table of maximum monthly income, by family size, can be located in Appendix II of this guide. Failure to do so will result in issuance of a Notice of Action for disenrollment from services.

A family may, at any time, voluntarily report income or other changes. This information shall be used, as applicable, to reduce the family's fees, increase the family's services, or extend the period of the family's eligibility before recertification. SNCS must collect documentation to support the requested changes.

Furthermore, a family may, at any time, voluntarily submit a written request to reduce their service level or stop services. SNCS must collect documentation to support the requested changes. Any such reduction in service hours is voluntary. **A family may retain services at the benefit level established at enrollment or recertification until the next certification period, regardless of any changes in their need for services.**

In order to best serve you, SNCS requests that parents report changes in contact information or childcare provider as soon as possible.

Recertification

Once a family is enrolled, recertification of need and eligibility for services must be completed no more than once per year. The Family Support Specialist will notify the family that the recertification is due, and what requirements must be met. The parent is required to attend a need and eligibility assessment, which includes a program orientation as part of the recertification process.

Notice of Action

A Notice of Action (NOA) will be issued any time a change in family size, need, and/or income occurs. A NOA will also be issued for disenrollment of services if program policies are violated, the family no longer meets eligibility requirements, or at the parent's request. If the family's services are being terminated, the parent may appeal the action by following the appeal instructions on the reverse side of the notice. If the family receives 3 termination notices for non-compliance within the certification period, the termination cannot be rescinded without an appeal. During the appeal process it will be determined whether the termination will be upheld or rescinded.

PARENT'S SHARE OF CHILD CARE COSTS

Family Fees

Parents may be required to pay a portion of their childcare costs. This portion is called a family fee. Family fees are assessed on a sliding scale based on the certified need for childcare services. Family fee amounts are established by the State of California and determined by the family's adjusted gross monthly income, family size, and whether the child is enrolled for full time care (130 hours or more per month) or part time care (fewer than 130 hours per month) as defined by the CDE. Family fees are billed according to the child who is authorized for the most care, regardless of the number of children enrolled in the program. Family fees are not adjusted for absences or actual use of child care. Parents are encouraged to report decreases in income or child care use so that family fees are billed accurately as adjustments will not be made under any circumstances.

Increases in the family fee rate will become effective the first of the month following the appeal period. Decreases in the family fee rate will be effective the first of the month following the income update.

Family fees are billed and collected by SNCS in advance. Payments are due to the Grass Valley SNCS office by the first day of the service month. Payment must be made in the form of check, money order or PayPal only. **SNCS cannot accept cash, or post-dated checks.**

If SNCS is unable to meet all of a family's need for child care for which need and eligibility have been established, SNCS shall grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to the other service provider of these child care and development services. The fee credit shall apply to the family's subsequent billing period, but shall not be allowed to carry over beyond that billing period. In order to receive a fee credit, the parent shall submit a receipt or cancelled check for the other child care and development services prior to the first of the following month.

Delinquent Family Fees

Family fees are considered delinquent after 7 calendar days from the date the fees were due. Upon determination that fees are delinquent, a Notice of Action to terminate services shall be mailed. If the fees are paid by the effective date of the termination notice, childcare payment assistance services may continue. Fees must be kept current; that is, the current family fee must always be paid; however, SNCS will accept a reasonable payment plan for payment of past due fees. If the payment plan is followed, termination of services for delinquent family fees can be avoided. If a family receives three termination NOAs for-noncompliance (including but not limited to delinquent family fees) the termination cannot be rescinded without an appeal hearing, even if the delinquent fees have already been paid in full. If a family is terminated for delinquent fees, all fees must be paid prior to re-enrollment for childcare services.

Non-Sufficient Funds

If a family fee is paid by a check that "bounces", a non-sufficient funds fee of \$30 will be added to the family fee bill. If two checks bounce within a fiscal year (07/01-06/30), all future payments must be made in the form of money order or PayPal only.

Co-Payments

A benefit amount, which is the maximum amount reimbursed for childcare services, is determined for each child receiving services. The benefit amount is determined in accordance with state regulation. Parents who choose childcare providers whose usual and customary fee exceeds their benefit amount are responsible to pay the difference between the maximum reimbursement and the childcare provider's fee. This co-payment is paid directly to the childcare provider by the parent and shall not be accounted for by SNCS.

Non-Reimbursable Costs

SNCS does not cover the cost of fees that are not included in the childcare provider's basic cost for childcare services. These fees may include diaper fees, transportation fees, late fees, etc.

SNCS will reimburse registration fees as long as the fees (or a prorated portion thereof) plus the rate established for the provider does not exceed the maximum allowable benefit amount. Any non-reimbursable portion of registration fees are the parent's responsibility.

APPROVED CHILD CARE SCHEDULES

The financial stability of SNCS childcare payment assistance programs is maintained by careful and constant monitoring of childcare attendance. Projections of cost are determined for each newly enrolled family and adequate program funding set aside.

An approved childcare schedule includes the days and hours of the parent's documented need for child care, as well as travel time, when appropriate. Additionally, if the parent meets certain criteria child care may be approved for study time and/or sleep time.

Child care is authorized according to the parent's certified need for services, as determined by SNCS. Reimbursement to the childcare provider is based on the parent's certified need for care, unless care is authorized on a variable schedule or part-time with a license-exempt provider. Services authorized on a variable schedule or part-time with a license-exempt provider will be reimbursed based upon the actual use of child care. The provider is only eligible for reimbursement on days the child attends care.

The approved child care schedule will be established at enrollment or recertification, based upon the documentation provided by the parent. That child care schedule shall remain in effect until the family voluntarily requests a change, the family is disenrolled, or the family is recertified.

Schedule Types

There are three different types of childcare schedules. The childcare schedule type is determined based upon the family's certified need for care.

Set Schedules

Child care is authorized on a set schedule when the child care need has predictable days and hours. These schedules are reimbursed based upon the certified need for care and are eligible for reimbursement of limited holidays.

Patterned Schedules

For parents with a need that requires them to be on a rotating schedule, need can be determined by examining the pattern. Examples include; rotating between day and night shift, rotates the off days, rotates over a 6-week cycle. These schedules are reimbursed based upon the certified need for care and are eligible for reimbursement of limited holidays.

Variable Schedules

Parents who are on-call, do pick up work, or such whose work schedule is not predictable fall into the category of a variable work schedule. Child care authorized on a variable schedule is reimbursed based upon the actual child care that is used. Variable schedules do not qualify for reimbursement for absences and/or provider closures.

Broadly Consistent Child Care Use

In order to ensure that children get the most out of their early learning and child care experience, consistent and regular attendance is paramount. The California Department of Education (CDE) requires child care utilization be broadly consistent with the parent's certified need for care. It is in the best interest of the child, and of utmost benefit to the child's overall development, when child care utilization is regular and consistent.

Parents may voluntarily report a change, with supporting documentation, and request to increase or decrease their service in an effort to maintain broadly consistent child care use and ensure accurate provider reimbursement.

Child care is not broadly consistent with the certified need for care when any of the following conditions are met:

1. Certified need for care results in application of a different Regional Market Rate (RMR) ceiling and/or provider rate than the child care that is actually used.*

2. Child care is authorized on a variable schedule but child care is used in an identifiable pattern throughout the month.
3. Certified need for care results in the application of a different family fee rate (FT or PT) than the child care that is actually used.
4. Any other pattern that indicates there may have been a change to the certified need for care (i.e. consistently using hours that differ from what is authorized, even if the reimbursement amount is not affected).

*For more information regarding how SNCS determines the reimbursement amount see Reimbursement Amount Determination.

Certificate of Enrollment

The Certificate of Enrollment (COE) is used to authorize the child care schedule; copies are provided to both the parent and childcare provider. The COE contains the approved childcare schedule, and the anticipated rate of reimbursement. COEs are issued upon initial enrollment and when changes occur, such as schedule or rate changes.

Notification of Schedule Changes

A family may at any time voluntarily report income or other changes. This information shall be used, as applicable, to reduce the family's fees, increase the family's services, or extend the period of the family's eligibility before recertification. The parent will be required to submit a Voluntary Family Change written request, and provide documentation of the requested change. A new COE will be issued to the parent and childcare provider once the change is approved and a Notice of Action will be issued to the parent reflecting the change.

Temporary Suspension of Service

Families who temporarily have no need for child care service, but do not wish to be disenrolled from the program may voluntarily report a change requesting a Temporary Suspension of Service. The parent will be required to submit a Voluntary Family Change form requesting a temporary suspension of service. SNCS is not responsible for child care reimbursement during the time in which the temporary suspension of service is in effect. A Temporary Suspension of Service shall be no more than 12 consecutive weeks during the fiscal year, and will only be granted once per fiscal year,

regardless of the duration. Reasons for a temporary suspension in service may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent break from school/training
- Medical, family, or maternity leave
- Parent visitation/custody arrangements

The family has the right to resume participation in child care services, according to their original certified need for care, once the temporary suspension of service has ended. Failure to resume services will be considered as Abandonment of Care and shall result in a Notice of Action to disenroll the family from services.

Changing Childcare Providers

Continuity of care relates to the child's continuous relationship and care experience with the same child care provider, and supports the quality of care over a length of time. Families are encouraged to maintain their child's continuity of care, however, families enrolled in childcare services have the right to change childcare providers at any time. Example of reasons for changing childcare providers include, but are not limited to: provider's program or hours of operation do not meet the entire needs of the family, convenience of provider location, provider closing their business, family preference of program philosophy, availability of before/after school care, etc. It is critical that the following procedures be followed to prevent a childcare provider or parent from absorbing costs for child care that are not reimbursed by SNCS.

- The parent must give the current childcare provider notice when choosing to terminate childcare services with a childcare provider. The parent should check with the childcare provider or refer to the provider's contract for the provider's termination policy.
- The parent must notify SNCS before services are authorized with a new childcare provider.
- The new childcare provider must meet requirements for childcare provider participation before services can start.
- Parents enrolled in the Family Child Care Home Education Network must choose a Network childcare provider. The parent should request referrals to current Network providers from SNCS.

Multiple Childcare Providers

Reimbursement is limited to one childcare provider per child. The following are exceptions:

- Child care may be authorized when the child's first childcare provider is not a licensed center and the parent chooses a licensed center for large group school readiness experiences.
- Child care may be authorized with an eligible alternate provider when one of the following occurs:
 - When the hours of operation of the first provider do not meet the parent's need for childcare services.
 - When the child is ill and the parent has to obtain an alternate provider (limited to 10 days per fiscal year).
 - When the child's regular provider is closed. Payment to an alternate provider when the regular provider has a paid day of non-operation is limited to 10 days per child per fiscal year.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT

Requirements for Participation

- All childcare providers that receive reimbursement from SNCS must be enrolled with SNCS before services are approved with the provider.
- All childcare providers are independent contractors and are not employees of SNCS. SNCS does not withhold taxes from childcare provider reimbursement; childcare providers are responsible for keeping records of reimbursement for their own tax purposes.
- In-home childcare providers are employees of the parent and must meet minimum wage requirements.
- All childcare providers are required to submit the SNCS attendance records for reimbursement. If a SNCS attendance record is unavailable, the parent and/or provider shall notify SNCS immediately and use their own document to record attendance until the SNCS attendance record is received.
- License-exempt childcare providers are required to complete an EMSA approved CPR/First Aid course within 90 days of the start of childcare services.

Attendance Records

Attendance Records (ARs) are mailed to childcare providers for each child enrolled for services. It is important for parents and childcare providers to follow these guidelines in order to receive reimbursement for childcare services. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in termination of services.

- Childcare providers are responsible for ensuring that AR's are available and easily accessible to parents at all times.
- Childcare providers must complete the billing sections on the reverse side of the AR; billing should be in accordance with the rates charged to unsubsidized families (not what the childcare provider expects SNCS to reimburse).
- The parent, or other authorized individual, must note the time of arrival and departure. Parents whose children are enrolled in CFCC funding must sign the child in and out of care on a daily basis.
- The parent must use full signatures; initials and partial signatures will not be accepted (CFCC only).
- Childcare providers must sign children in and out of care for split schedules (for example: school age children who go to and from the facility for school).
- Parents and childcare providers must indicate exact times of arrival and departure from the facility. "Block times" will not be accepted.
 - Accepted, Exact time examples: 8:02am-4:58pm, 8:26am-1:10:pm
 - Unaccepted, Block time examples: 8:00am-5:00pm, 2:30pm-6:00pm every day
- All entries must be made in ink; pencil will not be accepted.
- Parents must indicate exact reason for absence (for example: "fever," "vacation," or "with grandma"). If a parent indicates "absent" only or leaves the line blank the absences will be counted as unexcused.
- Anyone other than the parent who is authorized to drop off or pick up the child should have their signature on file with SNCS.
- Parents and childcare providers must sign the Attendance Certification statement at the bottom of the AR. **ARs that do not have an Attendance Certification statement signed by both the parent and provider will not be reimbursed.**
- If the parent does not see their child(ren)'s AR during drop off or pick up, the parent must ask the provider for it in order to record

times (and signatures, if CFCC funded) on a daily basis. If the provider is missing the AR because they have not yet received it, the parent must contact their Family Support Specialist to obtain a new one. The provider should maintain their own record of attendance while waiting to receive the original SNCS AR for the appropriate month. The provider's attendance record may be submitted for reimbursement if it includes the Attendance Certification statement "*I certify under penalty of perjury that child care services as recorded on this attendance record have been provided.*", signed by both the parent and the provider.

If there is a reason that indicates a parent is not adhering to the above requirements, the parent and/or provider will be notified of the non-compliance and technical assistance will be provided. Repeated non-compliance will result in a Notice of Action for disenrollment from services.

Absences

In order to ensure that children get the most out of their early learning and child care experience, consistent and regular attendance is paramount. Childcare providers are reimbursed for absences as long as it is the provider's usual and customary policy to charge for absences. The childcare provider must submit documentation to SNCS that this is their policy for unsubsidized families. The parent must indicate the exact reason for absence on the attendance record. Licensed childcare providers may also be reimbursed for 10 days of non-operation per fiscal year (7/1 – 6/30) if it is documented in their policies and submitted to SNCS. License-exempt childcare providers who provide part time care are reimbursed for actual attendance only; therefore, they are not eligible to receive reimbursement for absences. Reimbursement to child care providers will not be reduced for absences beyond the limits outlined below, however, excess absences interfere with learning outcomes for children in care. Furthermore, absences beyond the limits outlined below will be counted as days of non-attendance when determining if child care used is broadly consistent with the certified need for care.

Excused Absences

Absences for the following reasons are *not limited*. Please note that if a child is absent from care for more than 5 consecutive days due to illness, a note from a physician is required. The note may be attached to the attendance record.

- Illness or quarantine of the child or parent.
- Medical appointments for the child or parent.

- Court ordered visitation with the other parent (documentation of the court orders must be on file with SNCS).

Absences for the following reasons are excused, but *limited*. Absences beyond the limitations outlined below will be counted as days of non-attendance when determining if child care used is broadly consistent with the certified need care.

- **Family Emergency**

These are limited to 10 per child, per fiscal year (7/1 – 6/30), and include:

- Immediate need for treatment, illness or quarantine of anyone (other than the child in care or parent) in the family by a physician or a dentist.
- Death of a family member; funeral or memorial service.
- Any catastrophic event such as theft, fire, flood, weather, car trouble, or impassable roads.
- IEP (Individualized Education Plan), if the child is required to be present.

- **Best Interest**

These are limited to 10 per child, per fiscal year (7/1 – 6/30), and include:

- Parent or child vacation time.
- Time spent with visiting relatives.
- Non-court ordered time spent with non-custodial parent.
- After school or extracurricular activities

Unexcused Absences

This includes any absence that is not considered an excused absence or any absence that does not include an absence reason. Unexcused absences will be treated as days of non-attendance when determining if child care used is broadly consistent with the certified need for care.

Abandonment of Care

Parents must notify their Family Support Specialist within 3 calendar days if they do not intend to use care for 3 consecutive days of their child's approved and scheduled days of attendance, for an unexcused absence reason. Parents who do not use childcare for 3 consecutive days of their child's approved and scheduled attendance and fail to notify their child care provider and/or their Family Support Specialist of their extended absence, will be determined as

having abandoned their care. Abandonment of care will result in the issuance of a Notice of Action for disenrollment from childcare services.

It is the responsibility of the childcare provider to notify SNCS, within 3 days, if a child is absent from care for an unexcused reason for 3 consecutive scheduled days or with no notice from the parent.

Reimbursement Procedure

Attendance Records (ARs) are mailed directly to childcare providers. It is the responsibility of the childcare provider to submit attendance records in a timely manner in order to receive reimbursement for childcare services.

- Childcare provider reimbursements are processed twice per month, after services are rendered.
- Completed ARs are due to SNCS no later than 5:00pm on the 5th day of the month following care. If the 5th falls on a weekend or national holiday, ARs are due by 5:00pm on the next business day.
- ARs received by the 5th will be reimbursed no later than the 20th of the month.
- ARs received after the 5th, but prior to the 18th will be reimbursed by the end of the month.
- Completed ARs received after the 18th will be processed for reimbursement in the following month.
- ARs that are received after the last day of the month following the month of care will not be reimbursed.
- Incomplete or inaccurate daily entries cannot be corrected after being received by SNCS. If the bottom of the AR is missing a signature, the childcare provider and/or parent will be contacted as soon as the missing signature is identified. If the missing signature is corrected no later than the last day of the month following the service month the attendance sheet will be reimbursed the following month.
- Reimbursement will be made for approved days and hours of child care; Child care use that has not been pre-approved by SNCS, will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursements to childcare providers are issued by paper check or direct deposit.

Because SNCS is funded by the California Department of Education, timing of reimbursement to providers can be affected by a delay in the adoption of a State budget or other legislative delays.

Reimbursement shall not occur when an Attendance Record is submitted under, but not limited to, the following conditions:

- The provider was incarcerated during the time care was provided.
- The provider was out of the state or had a temporary absence during the time care was provided.
- The provider lost their license and was directed to cease providing care.
- The provider claimed a relationship to the child that precluded the necessity for TrustLine but, in fact, the relationship did not exist, or the provider has been denied TrustLine.
- The provider used a false identity.

Reimbursement Amount Determination

CA Code of Regulations, Title V, Section 18076 requires that contractors use a single rate category to reimburse providers. Sierra Nevada Children's Services determines the appropriate rate category by dividing the total hours of care authorized in a given month by 4.33ⁱ (the average number of weeks in a month) to determine a weekly average. Once a weekly average has been determined SNCS uses that number to determine the appropriate reimbursement category.

- If the weekly care average is less than 18 hours per week SNCS will reimburse at either a Daily or Hourly rate.
 - The Daily rate will only be applied if all days for which care was authorized in the month are 6 hours or more.
- If the average weekly care is 18 or more hours per week but less than 30 hours per week SNCS will reimburse at a Daily, Part Time Weekly, or Part Time Monthly Rate.
 - The Daily rate will only be used if care is authorized for 3 days or less per week and all days are 6 hours or more.
 - The weekly rate will only be applied if care is not authorized every week of the month.
- If the average weekly care is 30 or more hours per week SNCS will reimburse at a Full Time Weekly or Full Time Monthly rate.
 - The weekly rate will only be applied if care is not authorized every week of the month.

The Regional Market Rate (RMR)ⁱⁱ for the appropriate reimbursement category is then compared to the provider's rate. The lesser of the two is the

reimbursement amount. In simple terms, SNCS is allowed to reimburse up to the appropriate RMR amount unless the RMR exceeds the provider's rate.

Child care that is authorized on a variable schedule or part time with a license-exempt provider is reimbursed based upon actual use and is not eligible for reimbursement for absences or closures. All other schedules are reimbursed based upon the parent's certified need for care.

When Does SNCS Prorate the Reimbursement Amount?

- If care is being reimbursed on a weekly or monthly basis, and the authorized childcare schedule begins or ends in the middle of the week or month.
- If the facility is closed during a child's regularly scheduled day of care and is not otherwise covered as a paid closure.
- If a child turns 2 or 6 in the middle of the month, resulting in a change in the applicable RMR ceiling.

ⁱ If care is not authorized every week of the month the weekly average will be determined by dividing the total hours of care in the month by the number of weeks the authorization covers

ⁱⁱTo look up the RMR in your county visit <http://www3.cde.ca.gov/rccs/>

DISENROLLMENT FROM SERVICES

Reasons for Disenrollment

The parent and childcare provider will be issued a Notice of Action (NOA) to inform them of a decision to disenroll the family from childcare services. The following reasons are grounds for disenrollment from services. This should be considered a partial list.

- Failure to comply with the program requirements and parental responsibilities.
- Repeated failure to properly complete the Attendance Record
- Failure to complete annual recertification.
- Failure to pay family fees on time or comply with the payment plan agreement.
- Abandonment of care.
- The family no longer meets eligibility requirements.

- The parent knowingly misrepresents eligibility, using inaccurate or incorrect information or documents.
- Lack of cooperation with SNCS staff.
- Threats affecting the well-being of SNCS employees
- The parent requests to end services.

If a family's services have been terminated by SNCS for any reason, the parent and childcare provider will be notified by mail of the last effective day of services.

A third and final termination notice for non-compliance received within the certification/contract period is grounds for automatic termination of services. The family has the right to appeal any termination. The family must request the appeal prior to the appeal date indicated on the front of the Notice of Action.

Appeal Procedures

Parents have the right to appeal any decision made by SNCS regarding eligibility, receipt of child care, termination, or payment for services. Details of the appeal procedure are found on the reverse side of the NOA.

Requests for an appeal can be made verbally or by completing the back of the Notice of Action. If the request for an appeal is made verbally the back of the Notice of Action shall be completed at the appeal hearing.

If an appeal is not submitted to SNCS by the date the appeal is due, the parents' right to an appeal shall be deemed abandoned and SNCS shall implement the intended action.

SNCS will make every effort to schedule the appeal hearing at a time that is convenient for the parent. However, if SNCS is unable to schedule the hearing in a timely fashion the parent will be notified of the hearing date and time in writing. Failure to attend the appeal hearing shall deem the appeal abandoned and SNCS shall implement the intended action.

Misrepresentation Policy

Knowingly misrepresenting eligibility by providing SNCS with incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain a benefit that the parent would otherwise not be entitled to receive will result in disenrollment of childcare services. Child care used under misrepresentation may result in a referral to the

District Attorney. Parents will be responsible for repayment of funds dispersed under-misrepresented circumstances.

GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaints Regarding Childcare Providers

As a Childcare Resource and Referral agency, SNCS does not license childcare facilities nor does SNCS investigate alleged violations. The role of SNCS is to:

- Receive complaints.
- Act as a resource to parents, providers and the community in assisting them in contacting the appropriate authorities.
- Provide technical assistance to providers for compliance with licensing regulations.

Confidentiality will be strictly enforced regarding all complaints. However, if SNCS receives a request from an investigative agency to assist in the investigations, SNCS may provide information from the provider file to the investigating agency.

In no instance shall SNCS make an assumption of guilt or innocence based on the documented complaint.

The following complaint procedures apply when a complaint is received by SNCS regarding any childcare provider within its referral database:

- Ask the complainant if they have spoken with their provider. The provider may be unaware that the complainant is unhappy and may be able to resolve the issue immediately.
- Inform the complainant that SNCS does not investigate complaints.
- Direct the complainant to file a formal complaint with Community Care Licensing (CCL). Parents may telephone 1-844-LET-US-NO (1-844-538-8766).

All of the following are to be considered serious complaints and may be grounds for immediately placing a facility on temporary hold from referrals and/or terminating the facility as an eligible provider for subsidized child care reimbursement

- Violation of children's rights.
- Child abuse (physical or sexual).

- Use of corporal punishment.
- Unacceptable disciplinary techniques, such as shaming, humiliation, withholding food or toileting privileges, locking child in closet/bathroom, etc.
- Gross unsanitary practices/conditions, such as presences of feces/urine, improper food handling, lack of hand washing before and after food handling/diapering, etc.
- Broken/shattered glass or other sharp objects.
- Poisonous plants/household chemicals (unless properly secured pursuant to CCL regulations).
- Complaints alleging that children have been left alone or in the care of person(s) not cleared through CCL.
- Presence of unsecured firearms.
- Over licensed capacity.
- Insufficient CCL mandated child/staff ratios.
- Presence of unsecured and/or non-childproofed medications and vitamins.
- Presence of seriously damaged/broken toys or equipment.
- Presence of illegal drugs/provider intoxication.
- Any action (written or verbal) alleging discrimination of child and/or family based on sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.
- Any attempt to knowingly misrepresent records to receive payment from any SNCS program.

All licensed childcare providers are required to maintain, at their site, copies of CCL visit reports. Parents may access these records or may review the facility's profile on the CCL website; <https://secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/>. A childcare provider may be permanently removed from the SNCS referral database upon a decision made by CCL.

SNCS shall maintain a record of any written parent complaints regarding any TrustLine registered or relative childcare provider. Parents that choose a TrustLine registered or relative childcare provider may review the record of complaints maintained by SNCS on that childcare provider. All written complaints must include the nature of the complaint, the date and approximate time of occurrence and the name and address of the childcare provider.

Grievances and Complaints Regarding SNCS

Grievances:

Parents and providers are encouraged to share their suggestions and concerns, as this offers a way for our program to better serve their needs. Should a grievance concerning agency policy or practice be brought to SNCS attention, the matter will be forwarded to the Program Director in an effort to resolve the issue. If the matter is not resolved at this level, the complaint will be forwarded to the Executive Director.

Additionally, if satisfaction is not reached through the grievance process, a formal complaint may be filed with the California Department of Education. Uniform Complaint Policy information may be found in the lobby of Sierra Nevada Children's Services, as well as in both the Parent and Provider Guides.

Complaints:

Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) must comply with State and Federal laws and regulations when administering its programs. A complaint is an accusation that in some fashion SNCS has not acted in compliance with State and/or Federal laws and regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and non-compliance. In order to file a complaint, a "Sierra Nevada Children's Services Uniform Complaint Procedure Form" must be completed and submitted to SNCS. These forms are available at the SNCS office, free of charge, and may be requested at any time. A complaint should be submitted as soon as possible.

Complaints of possible discrimination must be filed within six months of the incident, or when first discovered. The Executive Director may extend this deadline for up to 90 calendar days for good cause.

Any individual, duly authorized representative or interested third party, public agency or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance. Confidentiality and protection against retaliation are assured.

The complaint should describe the non-compliance problem and include all the information needed to support the allegation or complaint. Complaint forms and assistance are available at the SNCS Grass Valley Office. The Executive Director shall assure that there is an investigation of the complaint and seek to resolve complaints at the local level. If all parties agree, a neutral mediator may be assigned. All parties shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when meetings are scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

You may send a written complaint to:
Executive Director
420 Sierra College Drive, Ste. 100
Grass Valley, California, 95945

An investigative meeting will be held within five working days of receiving the complaint to give all parties an opportunity to present information and question witnesses. Within 60 days of receiving the complaint (unless the complainant agrees to an extension of time), the Executive Director shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation including findings, conclusion of law, disposition of the complaint, rationale, and any corrective actions. Civil law remedies may be pursued through local, state or federal aid agencies, offices, or private/public interest attorneys.

You may appeal in writing within 15 days to:

California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

You must specify reason(s) for appealing the decision, stating how the facts of the agency's decision are incorrect and/or the law was misapplied, and include a copy of the locally filed complaint and the decision.

Appendix I

Countable Sources of Income

1. Gross wages, salary, advances, commissions, overtime, bonuses, tips
2. Gross income from self-employment less business expenses with the exception of wage draws
3. Gambling or lottery winnings
4. Wages for migrant, agricultural, or seasonal work
5. Public cash assistance
6. Child support and spousal support
7. Unemployment compensation, Disability compensation, or Worker's compensation
8. Survivor benefits or Retirement benefits
9. Rent for room within the family's residence
10. Foster care grants, payments or clothing allowance for children placed through child welfare services
11. Dividends, interest in bonds, income from estates, trusts, net rental income or royalties
12. Financial assistance received for the care of a child living with an adult who is not the child's biological or adoptive parent
13. Veteran's pension
14. Pension or annuities
15. Inheritance
16. Allowances for housing or automobiles provided as part of compensation
17. Portion of student grants or scholarships not identified for educational purposes such as tuition, books, or supplies
18. Insurance or court settlements for lost wages or punitive damages
19. Net proceeds from the sale of real property, stocks, or inherited property
20. Other enterprise for gain

Appendix II

Schedule of Income Ceilings (85% SMI) for Recertification Child Care and Development Programs

| Family Size | Family Monthly Income | Family Yearly Income |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1–2 | \$4,894 | \$58,724 |
| 3 | \$5,270 | \$63,235 |
| 4 | \$5,922 | \$71,065 |
| 5 | \$6,870 | \$82,436 |
| 6 | \$7,817 | \$93,806 |
| 7 | \$7,995 | \$95,938 |
| 8 | \$8,172 | \$98,070 |
| 9 | \$8,350 | \$100,202 |
| 10 | \$8,528 | \$102,334 |
| 11 | \$8,705 | \$104,466 |
| 12 | \$8,883 | \$106,598 |

Serving You at Three Locations:

GRASS VALLEY OFFICE:

420 Sierra College Drive, Suite 100
Grass Valley, CA 95945
530.272.8866
Fax 530.272.1354

TRUCKEE OFFICE:

10075 Levon Street, Suite 201A
PO Box 3239
Truckee, CA 96160
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