

TITLE XV
*INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT
 AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES*
 CHAPTER 170
 CHILD CARE SERVICES
 [Prior to 7/1/83, Social Services[770] Ch 132]
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PREAMBLE

The intent of this chapter is to establish requirements for the payment of child care services. Child care services are for children of low-income parents who are in academic or vocational training, or employed or looking for employment, or unable to care for children due to physical or mental illness, or needing protective services to prevent or alleviate child abuse or neglect. Services may be provided in a licensed child care center, a registered child development home, the child's own home, or a nonregistered family child care home.

[ARC 2169C, IAB 9/30/15, effective 1/1/16; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

441—170.1(237A) Definitions.

“Agency error” means child care assistance incorrectly paid for the client because of action attributed to the department as the result of one or more of the following circumstances:

1. Loss or misfiling of forms or documents.
2. Errors in typing or copying.
3. Computer input errors.
4. Mathematical errors.
5. Failure to determine eligibility correctly or to certify assistance in the correct amount when all essential information was available to the department.
6. Failure to make timely changes in assistance following amendments of policies that require the changes by a specific date.

“Child care” means a service that provides child care in the absence of parents for a portion of the day, but less than 24 hours. Child care supplements parental care by providing care and protection for children who need care in or outside their homes for part of the day. Child care provides experiences for each child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Child care may involve comprehensive child development care or it may include special services for a child with special needs. Components of this service shall include supervision, food services, program and activities, and may include transportation.

“Child with protective needs” means a child who is in foster care or has a case file that identifies child care as a safety or well-being need to prevent or alleviate the effects of child abuse or neglect. Child care is provided as part of a safety plan during a child abuse or child in need of assistance assessment or as part of the service plan established in the family's case plan. The child must have:

1. An open child abuse assessment;
2. An open child in need of assistance assessment;
3. An open child welfare case as a result of a child abuse assessment;
4. A petition on file for a child in need of assistance adjudication; or
5. Adjudication as a child in need of assistance.

“Child with special needs” means a child with one or more of the following conditions:

1. The child has been diagnosed by a physician or by a person endorsed for service as a school psychologist by the Iowa department of education to have a developmental disability which substantially limits one or more major life activities, and the child requires professional treatment, assistance in self-care, or the purchase of special adaptive equipment.

2. The child has been determined by a qualified intellectual disability professional as defined in rule 441—83.60(249A) to have a condition which impairs the child’s intellectual and social functioning.

3. The child has been diagnosed by a mental health professional as defined in rule 441—24.1(225C) to have a behavioral or emotional disorder characterized by situationally inappropriate behavior which deviates substantially from behavior appropriate to the child’s age, or which significantly interferes with the child’s intellectual, social, or personal adjustment.

“*Client*” means a current or former recipient of the child care assistance program.

“*Client error*” means and may result from:

1. False or misleading statements, oral or written, regarding the client’s income, resources, or other circumstances which affect eligibility or the amount of assistance received;

2. Failure to timely report changes in income, resources, or other circumstances which affect eligibility or the amount of assistance received;

3. Failure to timely report the receipt of child care units in excess of the number approved by the department;

4. Failure to comply with the need for service requirements.

“*Department*” means the Iowa department of human services.

“*Food services*” means the preparation and serving of nutritionally balanced meals and snacks.

“*Fraudulent means*” means knowingly making or causing to be made a false statement or a misrepresentation of a material fact, knowingly failing to disclose a material fact, or committing a fraudulent practice.

“*In-home*” means care which is provided within the child’s own home.

“*Migrant seasonal farm worker*” means a person to whom all of the following conditions apply:

1. The person performs seasonal agricultural work which requires travel so that the person is unable to return to the person’s permanent residence within the same day.

2. Most of the person’s income is derived from seasonal agricultural work performed during the months of July through October. Most shall mean the simple majority of the income.

3. The person generally performs seasonal agricultural work in Iowa during the months of July through October.

“*On-line or distance learning*” means training such as, but not limited to, training conducted over the Iowa communications network, on-line courses, or web conferencing. The training includes:

1. Interaction between the instructor and the student, such as required chats or message boards;

2. Mechanisms for evaluation and measurement of student achievement.

“*Overpayment*” means any benefit or payment received in an amount greater than the amount the client or provider is entitled to receive.

“*Parent*” means the parent or the person who serves in the capacity of the parent of the child receiving child care assistance services.

“*Program and activities*” means the daily schedule of experiences in a child care setting.

“*PROMISE JOBS*” means the department’s work and training program, promoting independence and self-sufficiency through employment job opportunities and basic skills, as described in 441—Chapter 93.

“*Provider*” means a licensed child care center, a registered child development home, a caretaker who provides care for a child in the child’s home, or a nonregistered child care home.

“*Provider error*” means and may result from:

1. Presentation for payment of any false or fraudulent claim for services or merchandise;

2. Submittal of false information for the purpose of obtaining greater compensation than that to which the provider is legally entitled;

3. Failure to report the receipt of a child care assistance payment in excess of that approved by the department;

4. Charging the department an amount for services rendered over and above what is charged private pay clients for the same services;

5. Failure to maintain a copy of Form 470-4535 signed by the parent and the provider.

“*Recoupment*” means the repayment of an overpayment by a payment from the client or provider or both.

“*Supervision*” means the care, protection, and guidance of a child.

“*Transportation*” means the movement of children in a four or more wheeled vehicle designed to carry passengers, such as a car, van, or bus, between home and facility.

“*Unit of service*” means a half day which shall be up to 5 hours of service per 24-hour period.

“*Vocational training or education*” means a training plan which includes a specific goal, that is, high school completion, improved English skills, or development of specific academic or vocational skills.

Training may be approved for high school completion activities, high school equivalency, adult basic education, English as a second language, or postsecondary education, up to and including an associate or a baccalaureate degree program.

[ARC 8506B, IAB 2/10/10, effective 3/1/10; ARC 9651B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 10/1/11; ARC 1525C, IAB 7/9/14, effective 7/1/14; ARC 1606C, IAB 9/3/14, effective 10/8/14; ARC 2169C, IAB 9/30/15, effective 1/1/16; ARC 2555C, IAB 6/8/16, effective 7/1/16; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

441—170.2(237A,239B) Eligibility requirements. A person deemed eligible for benefits under this chapter is subject to all other state child care assistance requirements including, but not limited to, provider requirements under Iowa Code chapter 237A and provider reimbursement methodology. The department shall determine the number of units of service to be approved.

170.2(1) Financial eligibility. Financial eligibility for child care assistance shall be based on federal poverty levels as determined by the Office of Management and Budget and on Iowa’s median family income as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty guidelines and median family income amounts are updated annually. Changes shall go into effect for the child care assistance program on July 1 of each year.

a. Income limits.

(1) For initial eligibility, an applicant family’s nonexempt gross monthly income as established in paragraph 170.2(1)“c” cannot exceed the amounts in this subparagraph.

1. 160 percent of the federal poverty level applicable to the family size for children needing basic care; or
2. 200 percent of the federal poverty level applicable to the family size for children needing special-needs care; or
3. 85 percent of Iowa’s median family income, if that figure is lower than the standard in numbered paragraph “1” or “2.”

(2) For ongoing eligibility, at the time of a family’s annual eligibility redetermination as described in subrule 170.3(5), if the family’s nonexempt gross monthly income as established in paragraph 170.2(1)“c” exceeds the amounts in subparagraph 170.2(1)“a”(1), the family may continue to be eligible as long as the family’s nonexempt gross monthly income does not exceed the amounts in this subparagraph.

1. 225 percent of the federal poverty level applicable to the family size for children needing basic care or special-needs care; or
2. 85 percent of Iowa’s median family income, if that figure is lower than the standard in numbered paragraph “1.”

(3) For ongoing eligibility, at the time of a family’s annual eligibility redetermination as described in subrule 170.3(5), if the family’s nonexempt gross monthly income as established in paragraph 170.2(1)“c” exceeds the amounts in subparagraphs 170.2(1)“a”(1) and 170.2(1)“a”(2), the family may continue to be eligible as long as the family’s nonexempt gross monthly income does not exceed the amounts in this subparagraph.

1. 250 percent of the federal poverty level applicable to the family size for children needing basic care; or
2. 275 percent of the federal poverty level applicable to the family size for children needing special-needs care.

b. Exceptions to income limits.

(1) A person who is participating in activities approved under the PROMISE JOBS program is eligible for child care assistance without regard to income if there is a need for child care services.

(2) A person who is part of the family investment program or whose earned income was taken into account in determining the needs of a family investment program recipient is eligible for child care assistance without regard to income if there is a need for child care services.

(3) Protective child care services are provided without regard to income.

(4) In certain cases, the department will provide child care services directed in a court order.

(5) Child care services for licensed foster parents who need child care for foster children are provided without regard to income.

c. Determining gross income. Eligibility shall be determined using a projection of income based on the best estimate of future income. In determining a family's gross monthly income, the department shall consider all income received by a family member from sources identified by the U.S. Census Bureau in computing median income, unless excluded under paragraph 170.2(1)"d."

(1) Income considered shall include wages or salary, net profit from farm or nonfarm self-employment, social security, dividends, interest, income from estates or trusts, net rental income and royalties, public assistance or welfare payments, pensions and annuities, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation, alimony, child support, veterans pensions, cash payments, casino profits, railroad retirement, permanent disability insurance, strike pay and living allowance payments made to participants of the AmeriCorps program. "Net profit from self-employment" means gross income less the costs of producing the income other than depreciation. A net loss in self-employment income cannot be offset from other earned or unearned income.

(2) For migrant seasonal farm workers, the monthly gross income shall be determined by calculating the total amount of income earned in a 12-month period preceding the date of application and dividing the total amount by 12.

(3) When income received weekly or once every two weeks is projected for future months, income shall be projected by adding all income received in the period being used for the projection and dividing the result by the number of instances of income received in that period. The result shall be multiplied by four if the income is received weekly, or by two if the income is received biweekly, regardless of the number of weekly or biweekly payments to be made in future months.

d. Income exclusions. The following sources are excluded from the computation of monthly gross income:

(1) Per capita payments from or funds held in trust in satisfaction of a judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the court of claims.

(2) Payments made pursuant to the Alaska Claims Settlement Act, to the extent the payments are exempt from taxation under Section 21(a) of the Act.

(3) Money received from the sale of property, unless the person was engaged in the business of selling property.

(4) Withdrawals of bank deposits.

(5) Money borrowed.

(6) Tax refunds.

(7) Gifts.

(8) Lump-sum inheritances or insurance payments or settlements.

(9) Capital gains.

(10) The value of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allotment under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008.

(11) The value of USDA donated foods.

(12) The value of supplemental food assistance under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the special food program for children under the National School Lunch Act.

(13) Earnings of a child 14 years of age or younger.

(14) Loans and grants obtained and used under conditions that preclude their use for current living expenses.

(15) Any grant or loan to any undergraduate student for educational purposes made or insured under the Higher Education Act.

(16) Home produce used for household consumption.

- (17) Earnings received by any youth under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- (18) Stipends received for participating in the foster grandparent program.
- (19) The first \$65 plus 50 percent of the remainder of income earned in a sheltered workshop or work activity setting.
- (20) Payments from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- (21) Agent Orange settlement payments.
- (22) The income of the parents with whom a teen parent resides.
- (23) For children with special needs, income spent on any regular ongoing cost that is specific to that child's disability.
- (24) Moneys received under the federal Social Security Persons Achieving Self-Sufficiency (PASS) program or the Income-Related Work Expense (IRWE) program.
- (25) Income received by a Supplemental Security Income recipient if the recipient's earned income was considered in determining the needs of a family investment program recipient.
- (26) The income of a child who would be in the family investment program eligible group except for the receipt of Supplemental Security Income.
- (27) Any adoption subsidy payments received from the department.
- (28) Federal or state earned income tax credit.
- (29) Payments from the Iowa individual assistance grant program (IIAGP).
- (30) Payments from the transition to independence program (TIP).
- (31) Payments to volunteers participating in the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program.

EXCEPTION: This exemption will not be applied when the director of ACTION determines that the value of all VISTA payments, adjusted to reflect the number of hours the volunteer is serving, is equivalent to or greater than the minimum wage then in effect under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 or the minimum wage under the laws of the state where the volunteer is serving, whichever is greater.

- (32) Reimbursement from the employer for job-related expenses.
- (33) Stipends from the preparation for adult living (PAL) program.
- (34) Payments from the subsidized guardianship waiver program.
- (35) The earnings of a child aged 18 or under who is a full-time student.
- (36) Census earnings received by temporary workers from the Bureau of the Census.
- (37) Payments for major disaster and emergency assistance provided under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 as amended by Public Law 100-707, the Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Amendments of 1988.

e. Family size. The following people shall be included in the family size for the determination of eligibility:

- (1) Legal spouses (including common law) who reside in the same household.
- (2) Natural mother or father, adoptive mother or father, or stepmother or stepfather, and children who reside in the same household.
- (3) A child or children who live with a person or persons not legally responsible for the child's support.

f. Effect of temporary absence. The composition of the family does not change when a family member is temporarily absent from the household. "Temporary absence" means:

- (1) An absence for the purpose of education or employment.
- (2) An absence due to medical reasons that is anticipated to last less than three months.
- (3) Any absence when the person intends to return home within three months.

g. Resource limits. For initial and ongoing eligibility, family resources may not exceed \$1 million.

170.2(2) General eligibility requirements. In addition to meeting financial requirements, the child needing services must meet age, citizenship, and residency requirements. Each parent in the household must have at least one need for service and shall cooperate with the department's quality control review and with investigations conducted by the department of inspections and appeals.

a. Age. Child care shall be provided only to children up to age 13, unless they are children with special needs, in which case child care shall be provided up to age 19. When a child reaches the age of 13,

or, as applicable, the age of 19, during the certification period, eligibility shall continue until the end of the approved certification period.

b. Need for service. Except for assistance provided under subparagraph 170.2(2)“b”(3), assistance shall be provided to a two-parent family only during the parents’ coinciding hours of participation in training, employment, or job search unless one parent is permanently disabled as described in subparagraph 170.2(2)“b”(4). Each parent in the household shall meet one or more of the following requirements:

(1) The parent is in academic or vocational training. Training shall be on a full-time basis. The training facility shall define what is considered as full-time. Part-time training may be approved only if the number of credit hours to complete training is less than that required for full-time status, the required prerequisite credits or remedial course work is less than that required for full-time status, or training is not offered on a full-time basis. Child care services may be provided for the parent’s hours of participation in the academic or vocational training and for actual travel time between the child care location and the training facility.

1. Child care provided while the parent participates in postsecondary education leading up to and including a baccalaureate degree program or vocational training shall be limited to a 24-month lifetime limit. A month is defined as a fiscal month or part thereof and shall generally have starting and ending dates that fall within two adjacent calendar months but shall only count as one month. Time spent in high school completion, adult basic education, high school equivalency, or English as a second language does not count toward the 24-month limit. PROMISE JOBS child care allowances provided while the parent is a recipient of the family investment program and participating in PROMISE JOBS components in postsecondary education or training shall count toward the 24-month lifetime limit.

2. Payment shall not be approved for child-care during training in the following circumstances:

- Labor market statistics for a local area indicate low employment potential for workers with that training. Exceptions may be made when the parent has a job offer before entering the training or if a parent is willing to relocate after training to an area where there is employment potential. Parents willing to relocate must provide documentation from the department of workforce development, private employment agencies, or employers that jobs paying at least minimum wage for which training is being requested are available in the locale specified by the parent.

- The training is for jobs paying less than minimum wage.

- A parent who possesses a baccalaureate degree wants to take additional college coursework unless the coursework is to obtain a teaching certificate or complete continuing education units.

- The course or training is one that the parent has previously completed.

- The parent was previously unable to maintain the cumulative grade point average required by the training or academic facility in the same training for which application is now being made. This does not apply to parents under the age of 18 who are enrolled in high school completion activities.

- The education is in a field in which the parent will not be able to be employed due to known criminal convictions or founded child or dependent adult abuse.

- The parent wants to participate in on-line or distance learning from the parent’s own home, and the training facility does not require specified hours of attendance.

(2) The parent is employed 32 or more hours per week (28 hours per week if the family includes a special needs child) or an average of 32 or more hours per week (28 hours per week if the family includes a special needs child) during the month. Child care services may be provided for the hours of employment and for actual travel time between the child care location and the place of employment. If the parent works a shift consisting of at least six hours of employment between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. and needs to sleep during daytime hours, child care services may also be provided to allow the parent to sleep during daytime hours.

(3) The parent has a child with protective needs for child care.

(4) The parent is absent from the home due to inpatient hospitalization or outpatient treatment because of physical or mental illness, or is present but due to medical incapacity is unable to care for the child or participate in work or training, as verified by a physician.

1. Eligibility under this paragraph is limited to parents who become temporarily medically incapacitated, or to instances of one parent in a two-parent household being permanently disabled, while eligible for child care assistance based on the need criteria in subparagraph 170.2(2)“b”(1) or 170.2(2)“b”(2).

2. Child care assistance shall continue to be available for up to 90 consecutive days after the parent becomes medically incapacitated. Assistance beyond 90 days may be approved by the service area manager or designee if extenuating circumstances are verified by a physician.

3. The number of units of service authorized shall be determined as follows:

- For a single-parent family, the number of units authorized for the period of incapacity shall not exceed the number of units authorized for the family before the onset of incapacity.

- For a two-parent family where one parent is temporarily incapacitated, the units of service authorized shall be based on the need of the parent who is not incapacitated.

- For a two-parent family, if one of the parents has a permanent disability and is unable to care for the child or participate in work or training, the disabled parent does not need to meet another need for service requirement. The units of service authorized shall be based only on the need of the parent who is not disabled.

(5) The parent is looking for employment. Child care for job search hours shall be limited to only those hours the parent is actually looking for employment, including travel time. Job search shall be limited to a maximum of 90 consecutive calendar days.

1. For applicants, job search shall be approved for a maximum of 90 consecutive calendar days. If the parent has not started employment within 90 days, assistance shall be canceled.

2. For ongoing participants, job search shall be limited to a maximum of 90 consecutive calendar days and will be treated the same as a temporary lapse in need as described at subparagraphs 170.2(2)“b”(10) and (11).

(6) The parent needs child care services due to participation in activities approved under the PROMISE JOBS program.

(7) The family is part of the family investment program and there is a need for child care services due to employment or participation in vocational training or education. A family who meets this requirement due to employment is not required to work a minimum number of hours. If a parent in a family investment program household remains in the home, child care assistance can be paid if that parent receives Supplemental Security Income.

(8) The parent is employed and participating in academic or vocational training for 32 or more hours per week (28 hours per week if the family includes a special needs child) or an average of 32 or more hours per week (28 hours per week if the family includes a special needs child) in the aggregate, during the month. Child care services may be provided for the hours of employment, the hours of participation in academic or vocational training and for actual travel time between the child care location and the place of employment or training. All of the requirements relating to academic or vocational training found at subparagraph 170.2(2)“b”(1), except for the requirement to be enrolled full-time, apply to the part-time training in this subparagraph.

(9) The parent is a licensed foster parent who needs child care for foster children.

(10) Family eligibility shall continue during an approved certification period when a temporary lapse in need for service for a parent established under this subparagraph occurs. A temporary lapse is defined as:

1. Any time-limited absence from work or a training or education program for a parent due to:

- Need to care for a family member.
- An illness.
- Maternity leave.
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) situations for household members.
- Participation in a treatment/rehabilitation program.

2. Any reduction in employment or education/training hours that fall below the minimum number required at 170.2(2)“b”(1), (2) or (8) as long as the parent continues to work or attend training or education.

3. Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education.

4. Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons.

5. Any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or education program that does not exceed three months.

(11) Family eligibility shall be canceled if the lapse in need is not temporary because the lapse will continue for more than 3 consecutive months.

c. Residency. To be eligible for child care services, the person must be living in the state of Iowa. "Living in the state" shall include those persons living in Iowa for a temporary period, other than for the purpose of vacation.

d. Citizenship. As a condition of eligibility, the applicant shall attest to the child's citizenship or alien status by signing Form 470-3624 or 470-3624(S) or Form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S). Child care assistance payments may be made only for a child who:

(1) Is a citizen or national of the United States; or

(2) Is a qualified alien as defined at 8 U.S.C. Section 1641. The applicant shall furnish documentation of the alien status of any child declared to be a qualified alien. A child who is a qualified alien is not eligible for child care assistance for a period of five years beginning on the date of the child's entry into the United States with qualified alien status.

Exception:

The five-year prohibition from receiving assistance does not apply to:

1. Qualified aliens described at 8 U.S.C. Section 1613; or

2. Qualified aliens as defined at 8 U.S.C. Section 1641 who entered the United States before August 22, 1996.

e. Cooperation. Parents shall cooperate with the department when the department selects the family's case for quality control review to verify eligibility. Parents shall also cooperate with investigations conducted by the department of inspections and appeals to determine whether information supplied by the parent regarding eligibility for child care assistance is complete and correct. (See 481—Chapter 72.)

(1) Failure to cooperate shall serve as a basis for cancellation or denial of the family's child care assistance.

(2) Once denied or canceled for failure to cooperate, the family may reapply but shall not be considered for approval until cooperation occurs.

170.2(3) *Priority for assistance.* Child care services shall be provided only when funds are available. Funds available for child care assistance shall first be used to continue assistance to families currently receiving child care assistance and to families with protective child care needs or licensed foster parents who need child care for foster children. When funds are insufficient, families applying for services must meet the specific requirements in this subrule.

a. Priority groups. As funds are determined available, families shall be served on a statewide basis from a service-area-wide waiting list as specified in subrule 170.3(4) based on the following schedule in descending order of prioritization.

(1) Families with an income at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level whose members, for at least 32 hours per week in the aggregate, are employed or are participating at a satisfactory level in an approved training program or educational program, and parents with a family income at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level who are under the age of 21 and are participating in an educational program leading to a high school diploma or equivalent.

(2) Parents under the age of 21 with a family income at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines who are participating, at a satisfactory level, in an approved training program or in an education program.

(3) Families with an income of more than 100 percent but not more than 160 percent of the federal poverty guidelines whose members, for at least 32 hours per week in the aggregate, are employed or are participating at a satisfactory level in an approved training program or educational program.

(4) Families with an income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines whose members are employed at least 28 hours per week with a special-needs child as a member of the family.

b. Exceptions to priority groups. The following are eligible for child care assistance notwithstanding waiting lists for child care services:

- (1) Families with protective child care needs.
- (2) Recipients of the family investment program or those whose earned income was taken into account in determining the needs of family investment program recipients.
- (3) Families that receive a state adoption subsidy for a child.
- (4) Families that are experiencing homelessness.
- (5) Licensed foster parents who need child care for foster children.

c. Effect on need for service. Families approved under a priority group are not required to meet the requirements in paragraph 170.2(2)“b” except at review or redetermination.

170.2(4) Reporting changes. The parent may report any changes in circumstances affecting these eligibility requirements and changes in the choice of provider to the department worker or the PROMISE JOBS worker within ten calendar days of the change.

a. If the change is timely reported within ten calendar days, the effective date of the change shall be the date when the change occurred.

b. If the change is not timely reported within ten calendar days, the effective date of the change shall be the date when the change is reported to the department office or the PROMISE JOBS office.

c. Exceptions. The following changes must be reported:

- (1) Changes in income when the family’s gross monthly income exceeds 85 percent of Iowa’s median family income.
- (2) A lapse in a parent’s need for service found in paragraph 170.2(2)“b” that is not temporary.
- (3) A change in residency outside of the state of Iowa.
- (4) No eligible child remains in the home.

d. The department worker shall disregard any reported changes that are not required to be reported unless the change would cause the authorized units to be increased or the family copay amount to be decreased.

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441—170.3(237A,239B) Application and determination of eligibility.

170.3(1) Application process.

a. Application for child care assistance may be made at any local office of the department on:

- (1) Form 470-3624 or 470-3624(S), or
- (2) Form 470-4377 or 470-4377(S), when returned after the end of the certification period.

b. The application may be filed by the applicant, by the applicant’s authorized representative or, when the applicant is incompetent or incapacitated, by a responsible person acting on behalf of the applicant.

c. The date of application is the date a signed application form containing a legible name and address is received in the department office. An electronic or paper application delivered to a closed office is considered to be received on the first day following the day the office was last open that is not a weekend or state holiday.

d. Families who are determined eligible for child care assistance shall be approved for a certification period of at least 12 months. Families who fail to complete the review and redetermination process as described at subrule 170.3(5) will lose eligibility at the end of the certification period.

170.3(2) Exceptions to application requirement. An application is not required for:

- a.* A person who is participating in activities approved under the PROMISE JOBS program.
- b.* Recipients of the family investment program or those whose earned income was taken into account in determining the needs of family investment program recipients. The date of application is the date the family requests child care assistance from the department.
- c.* Children with protective needs.

d. Child care services provided under a court order.

e. Families whose application has been denied for failure to provide requested information who have provided all necessary information to determine eligibility within 14 days of the denial of the application, or by the next working day if the fourteenth day falls on a weekend or state holiday.

f. Licensed foster parents who need child care for foster children.

170.3(3) Application processing. The department shall approve or deny an application as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days following the date the application was received. This time limit shall apply except in unusual circumstances, such as when the department and the applicant have made every reasonable effort to secure necessary information that has not been supplied by the date the time limit expires, or because of emergency situations, such as fire, flood or other conditions beyond the administrative control of the department.

a. The department worker or PROMISE JOBS worker shall determine the number of units of service authorized for each eligible family and shall:

- (1) Inform the family through the notice of decision; and
- (2) Inform the family's provider through the notice of decision or through Form 470-4444.

b. The department shall issue a written notice of decision to the applicant by the next working day following a determination of eligibility.

c. The effective date of assistance shall be the date of application or the date the need for service began, whichever is later. When an application is not required as described under subrule 170.3(2), the effective date shall be as follows:

(1) For a person participating in activities under the PROMISE JOBS program, the effective date of child care assistance shall be the date the person becomes a PROMISE JOBS participant as defined in rule 441—93.1(239B) or the date the person has a need for child care assistance to participate in an approved PROMISE JOBS activity as described in 441—Chapter 93, whichever is later.

(2) For a family receiving family investment program benefits, the effective date of child care assistance shall be no earlier than the effective date of family investment program benefits, or 30 days before the date of application for child care assistance, or the date the need for service began, whichever is the latest.

(3) For a family with protective service needs, the effective date of assistance shall be the date the family signs Form 470-0615 or 470-0615(S).

(4) When child care services are provided under a court order, the effective date of assistance shall be the date specified in the court order or the date of the court order if no date is specified.

(5) For a family whose application was denied for failure to provide requested information but who provides all information necessary to determine eligibility, including verification of all changes in circumstances, within 14 days of the denial, the effective date of assistance shall be the date that all information required to establish eligibility is provided. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or state holiday, the family shall have until the next business day to provide the information.

170.3(4) Waiting lists for child care services. When the department has determined that there may be insufficient funding, applications for child care assistance shall be taken only for the priority groups for which funds have been determined available according to subrule 170.2(3).

a. The department shall maintain a log of families applying for child care services that meet the requirements within the priority groups for which funds may be available.

(1) Each family shall be entered on the logs according to their eligibility priority group and in sequence of their date of application.

(2) If more than one application is received on the same day for the same priority group, families shall be entered on the log based on the day of the month of the birthday of the oldest eligible child. The lowest numbered day shall be first on the log. Any subsequent tie shall be decided by the month of birth, January being month one and the lowest number.

b. When the department determines that there is adequate funding, the department shall notify the public regarding the availability of funds.

170.3(5) Review and redetermination. The department shall redetermine a family's financial and general eligibility for child care assistance at least every 12 months. EXCEPTION: The department shall

redetermine only general eligibility for recipients of the family investment program (FIP), persons whose earned income was taken into account in determining the needs of FIP recipients, and parents who have children with protective needs, because these families are deemed financially eligible so long as the FIP eligibility or need for protective services continues.

a. If FIP or protective services eligibility ends, the department shall redetermine financial and general eligibility for child care assistance according to the requirements in rule 441—170.2(237A,239B). The redetermination of eligibility shall be completed within 30 days.

b. The department shall use information gathered on Form 470-4377 or 470-4377(S) to redetermine eligibility, except when the family is not required to complete a review form as provided in paragraph 170.3(5)“c.”

(1) The department shall issue a notice of expiration for the child care assistance certification period on Form 470-4377 or 470-4377(S).

(2) If the family does not return a complete review form to the department by the end of the certification period, the family must reapply for benefits, except as provided in paragraph 170.3(6)“b.” A complete review form is Form 470-4377 or 470-4377(S) with all items answered that is signed and dated by the applicant and is accompanied by all verification needed to determine continued eligibility.

c. Families who have children with protective needs, licensed foster parents who need child care for foster children, and families who are receiving child care assistance because the parent is participating in activities under the PROMISE JOBS program are not required to complete Form 470-4377 or 470-4377(S).

(1) The department shall issue a notice of expiration for the child care assistance certification period on the notice of decision when the department approves the family’s certification period.

(2) The department shall gather information needed to redetermine general eligibility. If the department needs information from the family, the department will send a written request to the family. If the family does not return the requested information by the due date, the family must reapply for child care assistance, except as provided in paragraph 170.3(6)“b.”

d. Families who apply for child care assistance because the parent is seeking employment are not subject to review requirements because eligibility is limited to 90 consecutive calendar days. This waiver of the review requirement applies only when the parent who is seeking employment does not have another need for service.

170.3(6) Reinstatement.

a. Assistance shall be reinstated without a new application when all necessary information is provided before the effective date of cancellation and eligibility can be reestablished. If there is a change in circumstances, the change must be verified before the case will be reinstated.

b. Assistance shall be reinstated without a new application when the case was canceled for failure to provide requested information but all information necessary to determine eligibility, including verification of all changes in circumstances, is provided within 14 calendar days of the effective date of cancellation and eligibility can be reestablished. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or state holiday, the family shall have until the next business day to provide the information. The effective date of child care assistance shall be the date that all information required to establish eligibility is provided.

[ARC 8506B, IAB 2/10/10, effective 3/1/10; ARC 9651B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 10/1/11; ARC 2555C, IAB 6/8/16, effective 7/1/16; ARC 3092C, IAB 6/7/17, effective 7/1/17; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

441—170.4(237A) Elements of service provision.

170.4(1) Case file. The child welfare case file shall document the eligibility for service under 170.2(2)“b”(3).

170.4(2) Fees. Fees for services received shall be charged to clients according to the schedules in this subrule, except that fees shall not be charged to clients receiving services without regard to income. For families whose eligibility is established in subparagraphs 170.2(1)“a”(1) and 170.2(1)“a”(2), the fee is a per-unit charge that is applied to the child in the family who receives the largest number of units of service. The fee shall be charged for only one child in the family, regardless of how many children receive assistance. For families whose eligibility is established in subparagraph 170.2(1)“a”(3), the fee is a percentage of the cost of child care for each child in the family who receives service.

a. Sliding fee schedule.

(1) For families whose eligibility is established in subparagraphs 170.2(1)“a”(1) and 170.2(1)“a”(2), the child care assistance (CCA) and CCA plus programs fee schedule, dated July 2024, found on the department’s website is effective for eligibility determinations made on or after July 1, 2024.

(2) For families whose eligibility is established in subparagraph 170.2(1)“a”(3), the CCA exit program fee schedule, dated July 2024, found on the department’s website is effective for eligibility determinations made on or after July 1, 2024.

b. Collection. The provider shall collect fees from clients.

(1) The provider shall maintain records of fees collected. These records shall be available for audit by the department or its representative.

(2) When a client does not pay the fee, the provider shall demonstrate that a reasonable effort has been made to collect the fee. “Reasonable effort to collect” means an original billing and two follow-up notices of nonpayment.

c. Inability of client to pay fees. Child care assistance may be continued without a fee, or with a reduced fee, when a client reports in writing the inability to pay the assessed fee due to the existence of one or more of the conditions set forth below. Before reducing the fee, the worker shall assess the case to verify that the condition exists and to determine whether a reduced fee can be charged. The reduced fee shall then be charged until the condition justifying the reduced fee no longer exists. Reduced fees may be justified by:

(1) Extensive medical bills for which there is no payment through insurance coverage or other assistance.

(2) Shelter costs that exceed 30 percent of the household income.

(3) Utility costs not including the cost of a telephone that exceed 15 percent of the household income.

(4) Additional expenses for food resulting from diets prescribed by a physician.

170.4(3) Method of provision. Parents shall be allowed to exercise their choice for in-home care, except when the parent meets the need for service under subparagraph 170.2(2)“b”(3), as long as the conditions in paragraph 170.4(7)“d” are met. When the child meets the need for service under 170.2(2)“b”(3), parents shall be allowed to exercise their choice of licensed, registered, or nonregistered child care provider except when the department service worker determines it is not in the best interest of the child. The provider must meet one of the applicable requirements set forth below.

a. Licensed child care center. A child care center shall be licensed by the department to meet the requirements set forth in 441—Chapter 109 and shall have a current Form 470-0618.

b. Registered child development home. A child development home shall meet the requirements for registration set forth in 441—Chapter 110 and shall have a current Form 470-3498.

c. Out-of-state provider. A child care provider who is not located in Iowa may be selected by the parent so long as the out-of-state child care provider verifies that the provider meets all of the requirements to be a provider in the state in which the provider operates.

d. Relative care. Rescinded IAB 2/6/02, effective 4/1/02.

e. In-home care. The adult provider selected by the parent to provide care in the child’s own home shall be sent Form 470-2890 or 470-2890(S). The provider shall complete and sign Form 470-2890 or 470-2890(S) and return the form to the department before payment may be made. An identifiable application is an application that contains a legible name and address and that has been signed. Signature on the form certifies the provider’s understanding of and compliance with the conditions and requirements for nonregistered in-home care providers that include:

(1) Professional development. The provider shall complete:

1. Prior to provider agreement and every five years thereafter, minimum health and safety trainings, approved by the department, in the following content areas:

- Prevention and control of infectious disease, including immunizations.
- Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleep practices.
- Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent.
- Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions.
- Building and physical-premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury, such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic.
- Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

- Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event.
- Handling and storage of hazardous materials and appropriate disposal of biocontaminants.
- Precautions in transporting children.

Minimum health and safety training may be required prior to the five-year period if content has significant changes which warrant that the training be renewed.

2. Prior to provider agreement, two hours of Iowa's training for mandatory reporting of child abuse.
3. Prior to provider agreement, first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training meeting the following requirements:

- Training shall be provided by a nationally recognized training organization, such as the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, American Safety and Health Institute or MEDIC First Aid or by an equivalent trainer using curriculum approved by the department.

- First-aid training shall include certification in infant and child first aid.
- The provider shall maintain a valid certificate indicating the date of first-aid training and the expiration date.
- The provider shall maintain a valid certificate indicating the date of CPR training and the expiration date.

- (2) Limits on the number of children for whom care may be provided.
- (3) Unlimited parental access to the child or children during hours when care is provided, unless prohibited by court order.
- (4) Conditions that warrant nonpayment.

f. Nonregistered family child care home. A nonregistered child care home shall meet the requirements set forth in 441—Chapter 120.

g. Iowa records checks for in-home care. If a person who provides in-home care applies to receive public funds as reimbursement for providing child care for eligible clients, the provider shall complete and submit the required authorization form(s) to the department. The department shall use the form(s) to conduct Iowa criminal history record and child abuse record checks.

- (1) The purpose of these checks is to determine whether the person has committed a transgression that prohibits or limits the person's involvement with child care.

- (2) The department may also conduct criminal and child abuse record checks in other states and may conduct dependent adult abuse, sex offender registry, and other public or civil offense record checks in Iowa or in other states.

- (3) Records checks shall be repeated every two years and when the department or provider becomes aware of any new transgressions.

h. National criminal history record checks for in-home care. If a person who provides in-home care applies to receive public funds as reimbursement for providing child care for eligible clients, the provider shall complete Form DCI-45 and Form FD-258.

- (1) The provider subject to this check shall submit any other forms required by the department of public safety to authorize the release of records.

- (2) The provider subject to this check is responsible for any costs associated with obtaining the fingerprints and for submitting the prints to the department.

- (3) Fingerprints may be taken (rolled) by law enforcement agencies or by agencies or companies that specialize in taking fingerprints.

- (4) The national criminal history record check shall be repeated for each person subject to the check every four years and when the department or provider becomes aware of any new transgressions committed by that person in another state.

- (5) The department may rely on the results of previously conducted national criminal history record checks when a person subject to a record check in one child development home or child care home submits a request for involvement with child care in another child care home, so long as the person's national criminal history record check is within the allowable four-year time frame. All initial or new applications shall require a new national criminal history record check.

i. Transgressions. If any person subject to the record checks in paragraph 170.4(3)“g” or 170.4(3)“h” has a record of founded child abuse, dependent adult abuse, a criminal conviction, or placement on the sex offender registry, the department shall follow the process for prohibition or evaluation defined at 441—subrule 120.11(3).

(1) If any person would be prohibited from registration, employment, or residence, the person shall not provide child care and is not eligible to receive public funds to do so. The department’s designee shall notify the applicant.

(2) A person who continues to provide child care in violation of this rule is subject to penalty and injunction under Iowa Code chapter 237A.

170.4(4) Components of service program. Every child eligible for child care services shall receive supervision, food services, and program and activities, and may receive transportation.

170.4(5) Levels of service according to age. Rescinded IAB 9/30/92, effective 10/1/92.

170.4(6) Provider’s individual program plan. Rescinded IAB 2/10/10, effective 3/1/10.

170.4(7) Payment. The department shall make payment for child care provided to an eligible family when the family reports their choice of provider to the department and the provider has a completed Form 470-3871 or 470-3871(S) on file with the department. Both the child care provider and the department worker shall sign this form.

a. Rate of payment. The rate of payment for child care services, except for in-home care, which shall be paid in accordance with paragraph 170.4(7)“d,” shall be the actual rate charged by the provider for a private individual, not to exceed the maximum rates shown below. When a provider does not have a half-day rate in effect, a rate is established by dividing the provider’s declared full-day rate by 2. When a provider has neither a half-day nor a full-day rate, a rate is established by multiplying the provider’s declared hourly rate by 4.5. Payment shall not exceed the rate applicable to the provider type and age group as shown in the tables below. To be eligible for the special-needs rate, the provider must submit documentation to the child’s service worker that the child needing services has been assessed by a qualified professional and meets the definition for “child with special needs,” and a description of the child’s special needs, including but not limited to adaptive equipment, more careful supervision, or special staff training.

Table 1								
Half-Day Rate Ceilings for (Licensed Center)								
Age Group	No Quality Rating		Quality Rating 1 or 2		Quality Rating 3 or 4		Quality Rating 5	
	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs
Infant and Toddler	\$25.66	\$51.94	\$25.66	\$51.94	\$25.66	\$51.94	\$27.00	\$51.94
Preschool	\$19.50	\$30.43	\$20.25	\$30.43	\$21.50	\$30.43	\$22.97	\$30.43
School Age	\$16.50	\$30.34	\$17.10	\$30.34	\$17.50	\$30.34	\$18.50	\$30.34

Table 2								
Half-Day Rate Ceilings for (Child Development Home A/B)								
Age Group	No Quality Rating		Quality Rating 1 or 2		Quality Rating 3 or 4		Quality Rating 5	
	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs
Infant and Toddler	\$16.63	\$24.95	\$16.63	\$24.95	\$16.63	\$24.95	\$17.50	\$26.25
Preschool	\$15.00	\$22.50	\$15.50	\$23.25	\$16.00	\$24.00	\$17.00	\$25.50
School Age	\$15.00	\$22.50	\$15.25	\$22.88	\$15.50	\$23.25	\$15.75	\$23.63

Table 3								
Half-Day Rate Ceilings for (Child Development Home C)								
Age Group	No Quality Rating		Quality Rating 1 or 2		Quality Rating 3 or 4		Quality Rating 5	
	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs	Basic	Special Needs
Infant and Toddler	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$18.50	\$27.75

Preschool	\$16.28	\$24.42	\$17.00	\$25.50	\$17.50	\$26.25	\$18.50	\$27.75
School Age	\$15.00	\$22.50	\$15.75	\$23.63	\$16.44	\$24.66	\$17.50	\$26.25

Age Group	Basic	Special Needs
Infant and Toddler	\$16.63	\$24.95
Preschool	\$15.00	\$22.50
School Age	\$15.00	\$22.50

The following definitions apply in the use of the rate tables:

(1) “Licensed center” shall mean those providers as defined in 170.4(3)“a.” “Child development home A/B” or “child development home C” shall mean those providers as defined in 170.4(3)“b.” “Child care home (not registered)” shall mean those providers as defined in 441—Chapter 120.

(2) Under age group, “infant and toddler” shall mean age two weeks to three years; “preschool” shall mean three years to school age; “school age” shall mean a child in attendance in full-day or half-day classes.

(3) “No Quality Rating” shall mean a provider who does not have a current quality rating.

(4) A provider who is rated under the quality rating system shall be paid according to the corresponding quality rating payment level in the tables above only during the period the rating is valid as defined in 441—Chapter 118. If the provider’s quality rating expires, the provider shall be paid according to the “No Quality Rating” payment level. Programs whose quality rating has expired shall not receive backdated payments once a new rating is awarded.

(5) For a provider rated “Quality Rating 1” through “Quality Rating 4,” if the rating period expires before a new quality level is approved, the provider will be paid according to the “No Quality Rating” payment level until the new quality level is approved.

(6) For a provider rated “Quality Rating 5,” if a renewal application is received before the current rating period expires, the provider will continue to be paid according to the “Quality Rating 5” payment level until a decision is made on the provider’s application.

(7) “Quality Rating 1 or 2” shall mean a provider who has achieved a rating of Level 1 or Level 2 under the quality rating system.

(8) “Quality Rating 3 or 4” shall mean a provider who has achieved a rating of Level 3 or Level 4 under the quality rating system.

(9) “Quality Rating 5” shall mean a provider who has achieved a rating of Level 5 under the quality rating system.

b. Payment for days of absence. Payment may be made to a child care provider defined in subrule 170.4(3) for an individual child not in attendance at a child care facility not to exceed four days per calendar month providing that the child is regularly scheduled on those days and the provider also charges a private individual for days of absence.

c. Payment for multiple children in a family. When a provider reduces the charges for the second and any subsequent children in a family with multiple children whose care is unsubsidized, the rate of payment made by the department for a family with multiple children shall be similarly reduced.

d. Payment for in-home care. Payment may be made for in-home care when there are three or more children in a family who require child care services. The rate of payment for in-home care shall be the minimum wage amount.

e. Limitations on payment. Payment shall not be made for therapeutic services that are provided in the care setting and include, but are not limited to, services such as speech, hearing, physical and other therapies, individual or group counseling, therapeutic recreation, and crisis intervention.

f. Review of the calculation of the rate of payment. Maximum rate ceilings are not appealable. A provider who is in disagreement with the calculation of the half-day rate as set forth in 170.4(7)“a” may request a review. The procedure for review is as follows:

(1) Within 15 calendar days of notification of the rate in question, the provider shall send a written request for review to the service area manager. The request shall identify the specific rate in question and

the methodology used to calculate the rate. The service manager shall provide a written response within 15 calendar days of receipt of the request for review.

(2) When dissatisfied with the response, the provider may, within 15 calendar days of the response, request a review by the bureau of child care services chief. The provider shall submit to the bureau chief the original request, the response received, and any additional information desired. The bureau chief shall render a decision in writing within 15 calendar days of receipt of the request.

(3) The provider may appeal the decision to the director of the department or the director's designee within 15 calendar days of the decision. The director or director's designee shall issue the final department decision within 15 calendar days of receipt of the request.

g. Submission of claims. The department shall issue payment when the provider submits correctly completed documentation of attendance and charges. The department shall pay for no more than the number of units of service authorized in the notice of decision issued pursuant to subrule 170.3(3). Providers shall submit a claim in one of the following ways:

(1) Using Form 470-4534; or

(2) Using an electronic request for payment submitted through the KinderTrack system. Providers using this method shall print Form 470-4535 to be signed by the provider and the parent. The provider shall keep the signed Form 470-4535 for a period of five years after the billing date.

[ARC 7837B, IAB 6/3/09, effective 7/1/09; ARC 8506B, IAB 2/10/10, effective 3/1/10; ARC 9490B, IAB 5/4/11, effective 7/1/11; ARC 9651B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 10/1/11; ARC 0152C, IAB 6/13/12, effective 7/18/12; ARC 0546C, IAB 1/9/13, effective 1/1/13; ARC 0715C, IAB 5/1/13, effective 7/1/13; ARC 0825C, IAB 7/10/13, effective 7/1/13; ARC 0854C, IAB 7/24/13, effective 7/1/13; ARC 1063C, IAB 10/2/13, effective 11/6/13; ARC 1446C, IAB 4/30/14, effective 7/1/14; ARC 1978C, IAB 4/29/15, effective 7/1/15; ARC 2169C, IAB 9/30/15, effective 1/1/16; ARC 2555C, IAB 6/8/16, effective 7/1/16; ARC 2556C, IAB 6/8/16, effective 7/1/16; ARC 2649C, IAB 8/3/16, effective 10/1/16; ARC 3092C, IAB 6/7/17, effective 7/1/17; ARC 3791C, IAB 5/9/18, effective 7/1/18; ARC 4115C, IAB 11/7/18, effective 1/1/19; ARC 4470C, IAB 6/5/19, effective 7/1/19; ARC 5035C, IAB 5/6/20, effective 7/1/20; ARC 5675C, IAB 6/16/21, effective 7/1/21; ARC 5731C, IAB 6/30/21, effective 7/1/21; ARC 5891C, IAB 9/8/21, effective 11/1/21; ARC 6309C, IAB 5/4/22, effective 7/1/22; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23; ARC 8741C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

441—170.5(237A) Adverse actions.

170.5(1) Provider agreement. The department may refuse to enter into or may revoke Form 470-3871 or 470-3871(S) if any of the following occur:

a. The department finds a hazard to the safety and well-being of a child, and the provider cannot or refuses to correct the hazard.

b. The provider has submitted claims for payment for which the provider is not entitled.

c. The provider fails to cooperate with an investigation conducted by the department of inspections and appeals to determine whether information the provider supplied to the department regarding payment for child care services is complete and correct. Once the agreement is revoked for failure to cooperate, the department shall not enter into a new agreement with the provider until cooperation occurs.

d. The provider does not meet one of the applicable requirements set forth in subrule 170.4(3).

e. The provider fails to comply with any of the terms and conditions of Form 470-3871 or 470-3871(S).

f. The provider submits attendance documentation for payment and the provider knows or should have known that the documentation is false or inaccurate.

g. An overpayment of CCA funds with a balance of \$3,000 or more exists for a provider and that provider fails to enter into a repayment agreement with the department of inspections and appeals (DIA) or does not make payments according to the repayment agreement on file with DIA.

h. The provider is found to have more children in care at one time than allowed for the provider type as found at rule 441—110.6(237A) and 441—subrules 110.13(1), 110.14(1), 110.15(1), 120.6(1) and 170.4(3).

170.5(2) Denial. Child care assistance shall be denied when the department determines that:

a. The client is not in need of service; or

b. The client is not financially eligible; or

c. There is another resource available to provide the service or a similar service free of charge that allows parents to select from the full range of eligible providers; or

d. An application is required and the client or representative refuses or fails to sign the application form; or

e. Funding is not available; or

f. The client refuses or fails to supply information or verification requested or to request assistance and authorize the department to secure the required information or verification from other sources (signing a general authorization for release of information to the department does not meet this responsibility); or

g. The client fails to cooperate with a quality control review or with an investigation conducted by the department of inspections and appeals.

170.5(3) Termination. Child care assistance may be terminated when the department determines that:

a. The client no longer meets the eligibility criteria in subrule 170.2(2); or

b. The client's income exceeds the financial guidelines; or

c. The client refuses or fails to supply information or verification requested or to request assistance and authorize the department to secure the required information or verification from other sources (signing a general authorization for release of information to the department does not meet this responsibility); or

d. No payment or only partial payment of client fees has been received within 30 days following the issuance of the last billing; or

e. Another resource is available to provide the service or a similar service free of charge that allows parents to select from the full range of eligible providers; or

f. Funding is not available; or

g. The client fails to cooperate with a quality control review or with an investigation conducted by the department of inspections and appeals.

170.5(4) Reduction. Authorized units of service may be reduced when the department determines that:

a. Continued provision of service at the current level is not necessary to meet the client's service needs; or

b. Another resource is available to provide the same or similar service free of charge that will meet the client's needs and allow parents to select from the full range of eligible providers; or

c. Funding is not available to continue the service at the current level. When funding is not available, the department may limit on a statewide basis the number of units of child care services for which payment will be made.

170.5(5) Provider agreement sanction. If Form 470-3871 or 470-3871(S) is terminated for any of the reasons in subrule 170.5(1), the agreement shall remain terminated for the time periods set forth below:

a. The first time the agreement is terminated, the provider may reapply for another agreement at any time.

b. The second time the agreement is terminated, the provider may not reapply for another agreement for 12 months from the effective date of termination.

c. The third or subsequent time the agreement is terminated, the provider may not reapply for another agreement for 36 months from the effective date of termination.

d. The department shall not act on an application for a child care assistance provider agreement submitted by a provider during the sanction period.

[ARC 7740B, IAB 5/6/09, effective 6/10/09; ARC 8506B, IAB 2/10/10, effective 3/1/10; ARC 9651B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 10/1/11; ARC 1893C, IAB 3/4/15, effective 7/1/15; ARC 3092C, IAB 6/7/17, effective 7/1/17; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

441—170.6(237A) Appeals. Notice of adverse action shall be given in accordance with 441—Chapter 16. The right to appeal shall be given in accordance with 441—Chapter 7.

[ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

441—170.7(237A) Provider fraud.

170.7(1) Fraud. The department shall consider a child care provider to have committed fraud when:

a. The department of inspections and appeals, in an administrative or judicial proceeding, has found the provider to have obtained by fraudulent means child care assistance payment in an amount in excess of \$1,000; or

b. The provider has agreed to entry of a civil judgment or judgment by confession that includes a conclusion of law that the provider has obtained by fraudulent means child care assistance payment in an amount in excess of \$1,000.

170.7(2) Potential sanctions. Providers found to have committed fraud shall be subject to one or more of the following sanctions, as determined by the department:

- a. Special review of the provider's claims for child care assistance.
- b. Suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment for six months.
- c. Ineligibility to receive payment under child care assistance.

170.7(3) Factors considered in determining level of sanction. The department shall evaluate the following factors in determining the sanction to be imposed:

a. *History of prior violations.*

(1) If the provider has no prior violations, the sanction imposed shall be a special review of provider claims.

(2) If the provider has one prior violation, the sanction imposed shall be a suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment for six months as well as a special review of provider claims.

(3) If the provider has more than one prior violation, the sanction imposed shall be ineligibility to receive payment under child care assistance.

b. *Prior imposition of sanctions.*

(1) If the provider has not been sanctioned before, the sanction imposed shall be a special review of the provider's claims for child care assistance.

(2) If the provider has been sanctioned once before, the sanction imposed shall be a suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment for six months as well as a special review of provider claims.

(3) If the provider has been sanctioned more than once before, the sanction imposed shall be ineligibility to receive payment under child care assistance.

c. *Seriousness of the violation.*

(1) If the amount fraudulently received is less than \$5,000, the sanction level shall be determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b."

(2) If the amount fraudulently received is \$5,000 or more, and the sanction determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b" is review of provider claims, the sanction imposed shall be suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment.

(3) If the amount fraudulently received is \$5,000 or more, and the sanction determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b" is suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment, the sanction imposed shall be ineligibility to receive payment under child care assistance.

d. *Extent of the violation.*

(1) If the fraudulent claims involve five invoices or less or five months or less, the sanction level shall be determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b."

(2) If the fraudulent claims involve at least six invoices or six months, and the sanction determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b" is review of provider claims, the sanction imposed shall be suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment.

(3) If the fraudulent claims involve at least six invoices or six months, and the sanction determined according to paragraphs "a" and "b" is suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment, the sanction imposed shall be ineligibility to receive payment under child care assistance.

170.7(4) Mitigating factors.

a. If the sanction determined according to subrule 170.7(3) is suspension from or ineligibility for receipt of child care assistance payment, the department shall determine whether it is appropriate to reduce the level of a sanction for the particular case, considering:

- (1) Prior provision of provider education.
- (2) Provider willingness to obey program rules.

b. If the sanction determined according to subrule 170.7(3) is ineligibility for receipt of child care assistance payment, but consideration of the two factors in paragraph "a" indicates that a lesser sanction will resolve the violation, the sanction imposed shall be:

- (1) Suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment for six months; and

(2) A special review of provider claims.

c. If the sanction determined according to subrule 170.7(3) is suspension from receipt of child care assistance payment, but consideration of the two factors in paragraph “a” indicates that a lesser sanction will resolve the violation, the sanction imposed shall be a special review of provider claims.

441—170.8(234) Allocation of funds. Rescinded IAB 2/6/02, effective 4/1/02.

441—170.9(237A) Child care assistance overpayments. All child care assistance overpayments shall be subject to recoupment.

170.9(1) Notification and appeals. All clients or providers shall be notified as described at subrule 170.9(6), when it is determined that an overpayment exists. Notification shall include the amount, date and reason for the overpayment. The department shall provide additional information regarding the computation of the overpayment upon the client’s or provider’s request. The client or provider may appeal the computation of the overpayment and any action to recover the overpayment in accordance with 441—paragraph 7.4(3) “i.”

170.9(2) Determination of overpayments. All overpayments due to client, provider, or agency error or due to benefits or payments issued pending an appeal decision shall be recouped. Overpayments shall be computed as if the information had been acted upon timely.

170.9(3) Benefits or payments issued pending appeal decision. Recoupment of overpayments resulting from benefits or payments issued pending a decision on an appeal hearing shall not occur until after a final appeal decision is issued affirming the department.

170.9(4) Failure to cooperate. Failure by the client to cooperate in the investigation of alleged overpayments shall result in ineligibility for the months in question and the overpayment shall be the total amount of assistance received during those months. Failure by the provider to cooperate in the investigation of alleged overpayments shall result in payments being recouped for the months in question.

170.9(5) Payment agreement. The client or provider may choose to make a lump-sum payment or make periodic installment payments as agreed to on the notification form issued pursuant to subrule 170.9(6). Failure to negotiate an approved payment agreement may result in further collection action as outlined in 441—Chapter 11.

170.9(6) Procedures for recoupment.

a. When the department determines that an overpayment exists, the department shall refer the case to the department of inspections and appeals for investigation, recoupment, or referral for possible prosecution.

b. The department of inspections and appeals shall initiate recoupment by notifying the debtor of the overpayment on Form 470-4530.

c. When financial circumstances change, the department of inspections and appeals has the authority to revise the recoupment plan.

d. Recoupment for overpayments due to client error or due to an agency error that affected eligibility shall be made from the parent who received child care assistance at the time the overpayment occurred. When two parents were in the home at the time the overpayment occurred, both parents are equally responsible for repayment of the overpayment.

e. Recoupment for overpayments due to provider error or due to an agency error that affected benefits shall be made from the provider.

f. Recoupment for overpayments caused by both the provider and client shall be collected from both the provider and client equally, 50 percent from the client and 50 percent from the provider.

170.9(7) Suspension and waiver. Recoupment will be suspended on nonfraud overpayments when the amount of the overpayment is less than \$35. Recoupment will be waived on nonfraud overpayments of less than \$35 which have been held in suspense for three years.

[ARC 9651B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 10/1/11; ARC 1893C, IAB 3/4/15, effective 7/1/15; ARC 4973C, IAB 3/11/20, effective 4/15/20; ARC 6965C, IAB 4/5/23, effective 6/1/23]

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