



Provider Supports Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Introductions, Virtual Meeting Protocols, and Meeting Material Review

Provider Supports Executive Committee Co-Chair Katie Hudkins welcomed members and completed introductions. The group reviewed the October meeting minutes and Agency Updates.

- [December 13, 2023, Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Feedback Loop](#)
- [Agency Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We still haven't gotten our Trauma Informed Training bonus, and no one seems to know when we'll get it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DCYF sent information to providers on February 9th about Trauma Informed Care awards. Eligible providers will receive an email from Child Care Aware of Washington. • The Early Childhood Equity Grant opened on February 12th.
-------------------	--

DCYF Temporary Licensing Subcommittee (TLS) Recommendation Response

DCYF Senior Childcare Administrator Travis Hansen, Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose and Assistant Secretary of Licensing Ruben Reeves presented DCYF's formal response to the recommendations from the Temporary Licensing Subcommittee of ELAC.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentioning WA Compass made me reflect on Early Achievers and MERIT. Can the department update Coaching Companion so sites can only see their own staff? Currently we can see the names and emails of everyone in merit as we search for our team members. That seems to be a privacy issue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will follow up on this. • The supervisory review never allows providers to comment or defend themselves. • This really highlights that we need to bring the topic of monitoring visits and what happens during the supervisory review process to this committee. • When is the formal DCYF response memo going to be finalized for providers to see? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We're hoping to have a final sometime in March. • How long must items stay in child care check before they drop off? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It automatically comes off after three years. If for some reason you look at yours and that's not accurate, please let us know and we can fix it. • There are a lot of system improvements that we'd like to see but the overarching theme is there isn't a partnership between licensing and providers. In 2019 when the new Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) came out it was all about partnership and assistance and building something together. But it's twisted into if you get technical assistance once then the next time it's a write up and it's created this punitive system. I don't feel that same way from Early Achievers. This worries me for the field because I feel like it's going to push people out. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That's not the culture we want to create and we are committed to changing that. I'm hoping that these conversations will happen at the upcoming regional meetings so that our supervisors or area administrators will hear this so we can improve. • Is the audit public? Can we receive a copy?
-------------------	---



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That’s our Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) audit and that’s not typically something that we have published. It takes some time to actually go through a review and meet with our federal partners. There are follow-ups that that are still in process so it will take time to get that formal monitoring report. We’ll take this as a follow-up about what, if anything, we might be able to publish in the future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For transparency it should be published - if provider’s “snapshots” are shared, the departments should be as well. ● Will the checklist that shows the "first time forgiveness" items that are not supposed to be shared on childcare check be taken off? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First time forgiveness applies to low risk violations and do not show up on Child Care Check. We give technical assistance but if the next time we come out and it’s a repeat then it does show up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On the checklist it does show up as an item that was not compliant. Maybe DCYF understands the policy but parents that have access to this do not understand it. And more importantly, insurance companies are looking at those things to rate you for insurance are seeing those first time forgiveness items. It does say noncompliance because the whole checklist is on Child Care Check. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can look into it but the whole purpose is it’s not an item that is out of compliance. That why it doesn’t transfer over to the compliance agreement that you fill out.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to Travis Hansen (travis.hansen@dcyf.wa.gov), Ruben Reeves (ruben.reeves@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions or comments.

LD/CPS Investigation FAQ Feedback

DCYF’s QA/CQI Program Manager Taylor Nussbaum reviewed and gathered feedback on the draft FAQ docs for Licensing and Child Protective Services (CPS) investigations.

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some of the questions didn’t really have an answer. Specifically, they just said more information will be available or it’s just a website. It left for more questions rather than supporting us. ● If an investigator requests a full contact list of enrolled families, even when an incident only involves specific children do providers have to provide that information, and it does provide an RCW. The only thing in the RCW that I can find is DCYF shall have access to all relevant records of the child in possession of the mandated reporters and their employees. I feel like there’s an interpretation issue going on there when it comes to all relevant records because I do not consider anything relevant outside of the child that was specifically involved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I agree the responses were very vague, left up to interpretation and didn’t really resolve the questions. ● Self-reporting is a big component of this, and it’s not addressed at all in these documents. ● This is a FAQ for directors but there needs to be one for staff. Staff get no information before speaking with investigators. Communication between these multiple levels is super important. Teachers need to know what their rights are. ● We hand out a LD-CPS Brochure for Alleged Subjects for every identified subject in a Licensing Division/Child Protective Services Investigation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The challenge we’ve experienced with the brochure is, it is handed out after the interview.
--------------------------	---



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the next steps for this document to incorporate provider concerns and feedback? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We'll be gathering all the feedback from today and taking that back to the subject matter experts to revise some answers and bring another draft back to this group. • Rather than just site the RCW. The RCW should be hyperlinked and a summary of what the RCW is about. That would be helpful. • Just a comment that in general, it sounds like there needs to be supports for staff and sites going through these investigations.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please reach out to Taylor Nussbaum (taylor.nussbaum@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Background Checks

DCYF's Federal Initiatives and Collaboration Administrator Matt Judge and Provider Support Administrator Meryl Stride were joined by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Childcare Region X Program Manager Paul Nosky, Program Specialist Joshua Lee and National Subsidy Center Background Check Expert Lisa Clifford provided an update on background checks.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If our state would allow for fingerprinting to occur immediately, could the person be hired as soon as that clears? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The CCDF rule is that at least the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) with fingerprints or the state criminal history check with fingerprints is completed. The lead agency would have to make a notification and make a decision to do that. ○ They would have to work supervised by somebody that has completed that background check within the past 5 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does that happen in many states? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as provisional hires, there are several states that currently do it and several more are working on implementing it. • Being that our state is not participating in National Fingerprint File (NFF), does that cause any delay in our clearances when someone has lived in other states in the last 5 years? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When we run the background check, if it's a NFF state, we don't have to do that extra component of requesting an interstate check, so it has no impact on our timelines. • Does this apply to an employee who is not directly employed by the provider but serves multiple providers (for example, a regional employee like a facilities manager)? Assuming they don't have unsupervised access to children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Typically, large organizations have a home base somewhere within a childcare facility. That's where the state CCDF rule comes into play if they're going to have unsupervised access to children on a regular basis then they do need that background check. If they don't fall into that category, then it is up to the lead agency for that flexibility. • Is there anything in the federal law that prohibits the allowance of providers paying for a background check service that clears applicants quickly so that we can do supervised work in a center while DCYF completes their process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is a requirement that the lead agency perform the background checks. • We realize it would be complex and place the burden on the state agencies. Currently the burden was shifted entirely upon child care employers. • Where is the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) data coming from?
-------------------	---



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It comes from their system. They produce a very large report with all the turnaround times between each point of the process.● Is there a way to quickly get something for someone that's provisional if they aren't cleared within two days? Can there be an automatically triggered process to get some type of provisional light clearance? Is there a way that we can cut down all of the steps it takes to get a background check and have it be more streamlined?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ In 2023 DCYF completed a feasibility study and proposed solutions regarding a centralized background check office with a centralized system to process all background checks in Washington.● Just for clarification, if we hire someone from Oregon, who has passed the Oregon background check, we can hire them if they are supervised until the WA background comes back?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ No, my understanding is they need a background check in the state they are working. That background check would need to also look at background history in Oregon under federal requirements.● Where are we on fingerprint locations and appointment times? Did SB 5774 pass?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It passed in the senate and is in the house now.● I had never heard about the suitability assessment. If a potential employee has a red flag, are they always contacted by the background check unit for discussion?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ With suitability assessments, there are some crimes on the Secretary's List that are permanent federal disqualifiers so at that point they don't even go to a suitability assessment they are just automatically disqualified. If something does make it to the suitability assessment process, they do reach out to the applicant and set up a trauma informed interview. If they don't pass, they are mailed a certified letter giving them options to appeal the decision.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ I had heard that no one has successfully been cleared that appealed the initial decision. Is this not accurate?<ul style="list-style-type: none">● In 2023 there were 27,201 early learning background checks- only 25 people were disqualified after a suitability assessment, 23 people had a permanent disqualifying crime. 23,251 passed.● Dream-storming here: One of the ten DCYF offices is mobile? Maybe Directors could request if when they have a staff member who would have difficulty getting an appointment or with transportation?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ That's a great idea, especially in those more rural areas where public transportation is more difficult.○ There is a proviso currently being considered in the legislature to establish a mobile fingerprinting unit that will be able to go to you.● What are the active steps that DCYF takes to eliminate bias in determining who is considered suitable or not? I see that as very risky and easy to not be equitable because it's based on humans making choices.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ On this question regarding potential bias in suitability assessment, we were asked this at the January 25th special webinar and have drafted a written answer via the Webinar Q&A.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Please reach out to Matt Judge (matt.judge@dcyf.wa.gov) and Meryl Stride (meryl.stride@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.



Legislative Update

DCYF Senior Policy Advisor Melissa Cheesman provided a legislative update.

- [Overview of the Legislative Process](#)
- [Legislative Classes and Tutorials](#)
- [Legislative Information](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSB 6038 is welcomed by school age childcare providers as it reduces our B&O tax liability. • Regarding SHB 2195, the encroachment of school district into preschool before and after care around their ability to be eligible for some of these programs is worrisome to me. We need to be aware of these things so that we don't end up even more directly in competition for funds and space with school districts.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please contact Melissa Cheesman (melissa.cheesman@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Access and Living Wage Proviso

DCYF's Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose and Early Care and Education Access Project Manager Diana Stokes provided an update and gathered feedback on the Access and Living Wage Proviso.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State funds would be allocated to supplement staff wages/benefits? How would that be distributed? Directly to staff? I hope it's not about raising subsidy rates. That should be a separate thing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is something that we are exploring and looking at what are the best mechanisms to do that. • Have other states done something like this? Was it successful? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There may be pockets where that's happened and we're trying to do some literature reviews to find out what that looks like. • MERIT already does direct reimbursement for training. So why not MERIT? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can add that to the options we explore. • Looking at other states, do you have a sample of what they are doing that you can share? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Western Washington University is the one pulling resources together for our literature review and should have a report by May and can share more information then. • Is the business community being approached to be a partner in this venture? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is a great point, and one that we will bring up to the Child Care Aware (CCA) Advocacy group as well. • Philosophically- Do you cover the full subsidy needs of the lowest income families, or do you spread out the funds across incomes at the risk of diluting the subsidies to the point that they aren't helpful. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Great point. Things to consider as we think about phasing and availability of funds.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please contact Diana Stokes (diana.stokes@dcyf.wa.gov) and Nicole Rose (nicole.rose@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2024.
-----------------------------	---