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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Early Education and Care

EMB FY 2014-01	EEC Management Bulletin
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Subject: Opening Access to Remove Families from the Waitlist

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Effective Date: Immediate

For Use By: Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRRs)

Synopsis: Clarifies the policies and procedures to implement the child care waitlist remediation funding opportunity set forth in EEC's FY14 budget.

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Relevant Links: The EEC Financial Assistance Regulations and Policy Guide are located on the Department's website at:

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/regs-policies/20130118-revised-financial-assistance-regs.pdf>

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/regs-policies/20130117-financial-assistance-policy-guide.pdf>

Introduction

The purpose of this EMB is to provide CCRRs with clarification and guidance for issuing vouchers to children on EEC's centralized waitlist as part of the FY14 waitlist remediation funding opportunity. Through this funding opportunity, EEC anticipates providing child care subsidies to over 3,200 new children.

1. Issuance of Available Funding Letters to Children on the Waitlist

CCRRs shall issue available funding letters to families placed on the EEC waitlist on a first come, first served basis (i.e., the families that have been waiting the longest shall receive the first offers for this funding opportunity). In determining the families that have been waiting for child care financial assistance the longest, CCRRs must use the household "application date" reported on EEC's waitlist. By utilizing the household "application date", EEC can ensure that

families that have been waiting the longest, including all the children listed in the household, will have an opportunity to receive a voucher.

To illustrate this process, Family A opened a waitlist application on January 1, 2010, which at the time only included Child X. On March 15, 2013, Family A amended its waitlist record to add an infant, Child Y. Despite the fact that Child Y was not part of the initial application, the application date for the entire "family" remains January 1, 2010. As a result, Family A would receive an available funding letter for both Child Y and Child X, provided that the family's application date is at or near the top of the list.

It is important for CCRRs to remind families that this is a limited funding opportunity and time is of the essence. Vouchers will only be issued to families that respond immediately and provide sufficient eligibility documentation to the CCRR. Failure to respond to available funding letters within 15 days will result in the family being placed at the bottom of the waitlist with a new waitlist "application date".

Children currently receiving EEC child care financial assistance (i.e., child has an open/active contract slot or an open/active voucher) are not eligible to receive a voucher through this funding opportunity. These vouchers shall only be issued to children not currently in EEC subsidized care.

2. Allocation of Vouchers by Region

The allocation to each CCRR has been proportionally distributed in relation to the number of children on the waitlist by region. For example, if EEC has 1,000 vouchers to distribute and Region 1 has 2,000 children on the waitlist and the waitlist total is 8,000 (or 25% of the children on the waitlist), Region 1 will receive 250 vouchers (or 25% of the total number of vouchers allocated). The final allocations based on the aforementioned formula are listed below:

CCRR	3000-4070	3000-4060	Grand Total
New England Farm Workers' Council	336	123	459
Action for Boston Community Development, Inc./ABCD	517	188	705
Children's Aid & Family Service, Inc.	319	117	436
Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc./QCAP	131	48	179
Community Day Care Center of Lawrence, Inc.	691	253	944
People Acting in Community Endeavors, Inc./PACE	275	101	376
Community Action Committee of Cape Cod & Islands, Inc.	98	36	134
Grand Total	2,367	866	3,233

EEC will closely monitor regional placement and reserves the right to amend the voucher allocations to ensure that the areas of greatest need are being met and to provide the best value to the Commonwealth.

3. Appropriate Funding Accounts to Monitor Placement

Based on its allocations, a CCRR must place children through the 3000-4070 account **before** placing children through the 3000-4060 account¹ except when backfilling their sibling and military voucher allotment in 3000-4060. A CCIMS application enhancement has been implemented to allow CCRR staff to select the new 4070 funding account when placing children. All children funded through the 4070 account must receive a funding availability letter; each funding availability letter will contain a unique correspondence ID for each child. The correspondence ID will be a mandatory field entry on the placement screen. This enhancement will allow CCRRs and EEC to track the number of subsidized children placed through the waitlist remediation funding to ensure eligible children are placed timely and to ensure that EEC does not exceed its budget authorization.

Since the funding associated with this opportunity is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2014, CCRRs will be required to issue multiple vouchers at the initial assessment for families eligible for child care subsidies beyond June 30, 2014. To illustrate this process, Family A is eligible from October 15, 2013 through October 14, 2014. To issue this voucher, CCRRs will write an initial placement from October 15, 2013 to June 30, 2014 and select the new 4070 funding account, then write a second placement for July 1, 2014 through October 14, 2014 and select the 4060 funding account.

4. Sustain the Allocated Voucher Number throughout the Fiscal Year

It is expected that each CCRR will manage and seek to fill continuously its allotted vouchers throughout the fiscal year (i.e., until June 30, 2014). The CCRR will be responsible for tracking all awarded vouchers regardless of program placement and for sustaining utilization of all its allocated vouchers. By utilizing the CCIMS enhancement described above, CCRRs will be able to monitor and track placements throughout this process. Understand that the CCRRs must make best efforts to backfill all "unutilized" vouchers (i.e., child leaves care, child is terminated from care, etc.), as soon as possible.

5. Children Removed from the Waitlist Seeking Reinstatement

In accordance with EEC's Financial Assistance Policy, families removed from the EEC waitlist may be reinstated to their original application date (i.e., the application date prior to the removal notice), when they contact a waitlist agent (i.e., EEC, CCRR, Mass 2-1-1, etc.) within 6 months of the removal date. Families that have been removed may be eligible for this funding

¹ The 3000-4070 account is the line item established by the FY14 budget for purposes of waitlist remediation this fiscal year. The 3000-4060 account is the general account for income-eligible families in Massachusetts.

opportunity provided that their original application date falls within the range of oldest applications on the waitlist (i.e., if a CCRR is issuing letters with an application date between January 1, 2010 and March 31, 2010, the reinstated application date should fall within this range, in order to be issued an available funding letter). Families shall not be negatively impacted for failure to renew their waitlist application, provided that they respond to the removal notice and request reinstatement on the waitlist within 6 months.

6. Responsibility of Reassessments Remains with the CCRRs

The CCRRs will be responsible for reassessing all allocated 4070 vouchers. In other words, vouchers issued through this funding opportunity will be reassessed by the CCRRs, not the contracted providers.

7. Reporting and Communication Requirements

CCRRs will be required to track and report to EEC weekly all placements and continued utilization, using the EEC-approved template that has been provided under separate cover. The template tracks allotments (2,367) in 4070, new allotments in 4060 (866), and sibling (600) and military (25) allotments in 4060. Mandatory weekly conference calls with EEC have been scheduled for Mondays from 12:30 - 1:00 PM for CCRR Directors or their designees. The first conference call was held on September 30, 2013 to kickoff this funding opportunity.

8. Goals for Placement of New Vouchers

Each CCRR shall use its best efforts to ensure children are placed by December 1, 2013, in accordance with its voucher allocation.

EEC appreciates your continued service and cooperation to provide assistance to as many low income families as possible while remaining fiscally responsible to the citizens of Massachusetts.