Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan
For

Mississippi
FFY 2012-2013

PART 1
ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Contact Information

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto.(658D, 658E)

1.1.1 Who is the Lead Agency designated to administer the CCDF program? Identify the Lead Agency and Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer designated by the State/Territory. ACF will send official grant correspondence such as grant awards, grant adjustments, Plan approvals and disallowance notifications to the designated contact identified here. (658D(a), §98.10)

Name of Lead Agency: Mississippi Department of Human Services

Address of Lead Agency: 750 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: Mr. Don Thompson, Executive Director
Phone Number: 601-359-4480

Fax Number: 601-359-4910

E-Mail Address: Don.Thompson@mdhs.ms.gov

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.mdhs.ms.gov

1.1.2 Who is the CCDF administrator? Identify the CCDF administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, with responsibility for administering the State/Territory's CCDF program. ACF will send programmatic communications such as program announcements, program instructions, and data collection instructions to the designated contact identified here. **If there is more than one designated contact with equal or shared responsibility for administering the CCDF program, please identify the co-administrator or entity with administrative responsibilities and include contact information.** (§§98.16(a) and (c)(1))

a) Contact Information for CCDF Administrator:

Name of CCDF Administrator: Dr. Jll Dent

Title of CCDF Administrator: Director, MDHS Division of Early Childhood Care and Development
Address of CCDF Administrator: 750 North State Street, Jackson, MS 39202

Phone Number: 601-359-4551

Fax Number: 601-359-4422

E-Mail Address: Jll.Dent@mdhs.ms.gov

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.mdhs.ms.gov
Phone Number for CCDF program information
(for the public) (if any): 1800-8777882
Web Address for CCDF program
(for the public) (if any): www.childcareinfo.ms
Web Address for CCDF program policy manual
(if any): www.childcareinfo.ms
Web Address for CCDF program administrative rules
(if any): www.childcareinfo.ms

b) Contact Information for CCDF Co-Administrator (if applicable):

Name of CCDF Co-Administrator:
Title of CCDF Co-Administrator:
Address of CCDF Co-Administrator:
Phone Number:
Fax Number:
E-Mail Address:
Description of the role of the Co-Administrator:

1.2 Estimated Funding

1.2.1 What is your expected level of funding for the first year of the FY 2012 - FY 2013 plan period?

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012. (§98.13(a)).

FY 2012 Federal CCDF allocation (Discretionary, Mandatory and Matching): $ 31,692,771
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: $ 19160,650
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: $ 000000
State CCDF Maintenance-of-Effort Funds: $ 1715430
State Matching Funds: $ 8840000

Reminder - Lead Agencies are reminded that not more than 5 percent of the aggregate CCDF funds, including federal funds and required State Matching funds, shall be expended on administration costs (§98.52) once all FY2012 funds have been liquidated.

State Maintenance-of-Effort funds are not subject to this limitation.

1.2.2 Which of the following funds does the Lead Agency intend to use to meet the CCDF Matching and maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirements described in 98.53(e) and 98.53(h)? Check all that apply.

☐ Territories not required to meet CCDF Matching and MOE requirements should mark N/A here

Note: The Lead Agency must check at least public and/or private funds as matching, evenif pre-kindergarten (pre-k) funds also will be used.

☑ **Public funds to meet the CCDF Matching Fund requirement Public funds may includeany general revenue funds, county or other local public funds, State/Territory-specific funds (tobacco tax, lottery), or any other public funds. If checked, identify source of funds:**

State General Fund and Fees and funds collected by the Mississippi Department of Health for licensureregulatory infractions. These funds collected consist of license application and renewal fees.

☑ **If known, identify the estimated amount of public funds the Lead Agency will receive:** 。

Private Donated Funds to meet the CCDF Matching Fund requirement Only privatereceived by the designated entities or by the Lead Agency may be counted for matchpurposes. (98.53(f))

☐

☑ **If checked, are those funds:**

donated directly to the State?

donated to a separate entity(ies) designated to receive private donated funds? If checked, identify the number of entities designated to receive private donated fundsand provide name, address, contact and type:

Children's Defense Fund
Southern Regional Office
Headquarters 2659 Livingston Road, Suite 200
Jackson, MS 39213
Director, Oleta Fitzgerald
601-321-1966
ofitzgerald@childrensdefense.org

☐ **If known, identify the estimated amount of private donated funds the Lead Agency willreceive:** 。

State expenditures for Pre-K programs to meet the CCDF Matching Fundsrequirement.

If checked, provide the estimated percentage of Matching Fund requirement that will be

met with pre-k expenditures (not to exceed 30%):。
If percentage is more than 10% of the Matching fund requirement, describe how the Statewill coordinate its pre-k and child care services:

If known, identify the estimated amount of pre-k funds the Lead Agency will receive for Matching Funds requirement:
Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that pre-k programs meet the needs of working parents:

☐ State expenditures for Pre-K programs to meet the CCDF Maintenance of Effort (MOE requirements.

If checked,
☐ The Lead Agency assures that its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to 98.53(h)(1).
Estimated percentage of MOE Fund requirement that will be met with pre-k expenditures (not to exceed 20%):
If percentage is more than 10% of the MOE fund requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its pre-k and child care services to expand the availability of child care:

If known, identify the estimated amount of pre-k funds the Lead Agency will receive for MOE Fund requirement:
Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that pre-k programs meet the needs of working parents:

1.2.3 Describe the activities for which quality funds (including targeted quality funds for infants and toddlers, school-age children, and resource and referral) will be used in FY 2012. In as much detail possible, list the activities that will be funded, the estimated amount of CCDF quality funds that will be used for each activity, and how these activities relate to the Lead Agency's overall goal of improving the quality of child care for low-income children.

Activity	**Estimated Amount of CCDF Quality Funds (indicate if targeted funds will be used)**	**Purpose**	**Projected Impact and Anticipated Results**

A)Credentialing and CDA Program B)Early Childhood Conferences C) Business Partners (1) Project Innovation (2) United Way (3) Hazlehurst D) Training and Technical Assistance (1) General (2) Special Needs 4) Mississippi Child Care Resource and Referral Network F) Nurturing Homes Initiative G) In-Home Quality Enhancement Project H) Out of School Time Quality Enhancement Program I) Allies for Quality Care J) Parent Engagement Project K) Mental Health Project	A) $850,000 B) $116,000 C)(1) $180,000 (2)$100,395 (3)$115,000 D) (1) $1,000,000 (2) $400,000 E)$2,000,000 F) $825,000 (Infant and Toddler Earmark) G) $475,000 (Infant and Toddler Earmark) H) $700,000 (School Age Earmark) I) $2,000,000 J) $400.000 K) $2,000,000	A) This training program provides training and support to child care workers in licensed child care settings statewide so they may obtain the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for Professional Recognition. Additionally, the Directors Credentialing program provides child care center directors and staff 120 hours of module training. B) This program provides training in the state through a conference format for early childhood professionals to gain new information and skills. C) (1) Project Innovation offers developmental and enrichment experiences for approximately 40 elementary/middle school students and their parents in the Midtown (mid-Jackson) community encompassing zip codes 39202 and 39203 C)(2) This program provides child care services for families seeking emergency and/or protective services assistance.	A) The Lead Agency anticipates that this professional development program will increase the education and skill levels of the early childhood workforce. Educated teaching staff will support higher QRIS ratings, and expand the number of quality care settings in Mississippi. B) The Lead Agency anticipates that the conferences will provide needed information to providers in a group setting at a local level. This shared experience will allow for communication of information and peer-to-peer interaction. C)(1) The Lead Agency anticipates that this project will provide at-risk youth with an enriching environment that encourages cognitive growth and social health. C)(2) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will support families in crisis in providing stable environments for their young children. C)(3) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will align educational standards in this community and help eliminate service gaps for families.

		C)(3) This project is helping the Hazlehurst community focus on continuity of education with a partnership between the Department of Education, Head Start, and child care centers. D)(1) This program provides quality technical assistance and assessments to caregivers in licensed child care settings throughout the state that identifies the high level of quality child care through the use of nationally recognized environmental rating scales. D)(2) This	D)(1) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in a better educated and more competent early childhood workforce. D)(2) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in an increase in the number of classrooms capable of accommodating children with Special Needs. E) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in expanded access to information and support to parents, educators, and communities. F) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in

		based training and technical assistance initiative for licensed child care centers on the use of best practices to serve all children, including those with high risk factors related to disabilities, chronic health impairments, and special needs due to environmental factors. E) This service provides information for parents and caregivers in a variety of settings. F) This program provides educational training and technical assistance to unlicensed in-home and family daycare childcare providers that offer full-day, full-year child care services to eligible families. G) This project will create a QRIS system for in-home providers. H) This project will create a QRIS for out of school care environments. I) The focus of this effort is to address the programmatic needs of child care centers through evaluation and intense on-site technical assistance. J) This project will support parents in their efforts to be engaged in their childs early education. K) This project will address the increased need for mental health services for young children.	higher quality care in unregulated in-home settings. G) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in higher quality care in unregulated in-home settings. H) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in higher quality care in out of school care and education settings. I) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in sustainable improvements to the level of quality offered by the participating programs. J) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in more families enrolled in QRIS participating centers and support for the role of the parent in these environments. K) The Lead Agency anticipates that this program will result in increased access to screenings and services to support young childrens social/emotional health.

1.2.4 Will the Lead Agency distribute quality funds to counties or local entities?

☑ No, the Lead Agency will manage all quality funds directly

☐ Yes, the Lead Agency will manage some quality funds directly and distribute a portion to local entities. Estimated amount or percentage to be distributed to localities

☐ Yes, all quality funds will be distributed to local entities

☐ Other.

Describe:

1.3 CCDF Program Integrity and Accountability

Program integrity is defined to include efforts that ensure effective internal controls over the administration of CCDF funds. The Lead Agency is responsible for monitoring programs and services, ensuring compliance with the rules of the program, promulgating rules and regulations to govern the overall administration of the plan and oversee the expenditure of funds by sub-grantees and contractors. (§ 98.11(b)) Accountability measures should address administrative error, which includes unintentional agency error, **as well as address** program violations, both unintentional and intentional, that may or may not result in further action by the Lead Agency, including those cases suspected of and/or prosecuted for fraud.

1.3.1. Describe the strategies the Lead Agency will utilize to ensure effective internal controls are in place. The **description** of internal controls may include, but is not limited to a description of processes to ensure sound fiscal management, to identify areas of risk or to establish regular evaluation of control activities.
Describe:

As of February 1, 2012, the Lead Agency will fully operate the CCDF program without the use of subcontractors, previously referred to as Designated Agents. Contracts providing for child care slots will remain in place. Training of all Lead Agency staff beginning November 1, 2012 includes:
Goals and objectives of the CCDF State Plan
All established policies and procedures for program implementation
All applicable state and federal rules and regulations
Eligibility and redetermination for the CCDF program will be achieved through the use of trained Lead Agency staff. Moving the staff to a central location allows for closer supervision of processes and greater adherence to policies. Case management and payment calculations for the CCDF program will be achieved through an electronic ledger system. This system's design includes business rules for payment and eligibility. This will eliminate the possibility for most human errors.

1.3.2. Describe the processes the Lead Agency will use to monitor all sub-recipients. Lead Agencies that use other governmental or non-governmental sub-recipients to administer the program must have written agreements in place outlining roles and responsibilities for meeting CCDF requirements. (98.11 (a) (3))

Definition: A sub-recipient (including a sub-contractor and or sub-grantee) is a non-Federal entity that expends Federal awards (contract or grant) received from another entity to carry out a Federal program, but does not include a vendor nor does it include an individual who is a beneficiary of such a program. OMB Circular A-133 Section 210

provides additional information on the characteristics of a **sub-recipient and vendor** (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2010). The description of monitoring may include, but is not limited to, a discussion of written agreements, fiscal management, review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with CCDF regulations, monitoring/auditing contractors or grantees to ensure that eligible children are served and eligibility documentation is verified, and establishing performance indicators or measures related to improper payments.
Describe:

Subcontractors providing child care slots are monitored though the Mississippi Department of Human Services Division of Program Integrity in accordance with the regulations established by this division for all entities engaged in contract services for the Lead Agency. These regulations can be found in the Subgrantee Manual located at http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/dpi_subman.htm.

The Lead Agency is participating in the CCDF Error Rate Reporting with other second year states. This reporting is in response to provisions of the Improper Payment Information Act of 2002. Mississippi's report has been used to better identify and correct errors.

1.3.3. Describe the activities the Lead Agency will have in place to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure program integrity using the chart below. Program violations may include intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations as defined by the Lead Agency. Administrative error refers to **areas identified through the Error Rate Review** process (98.100). Check which activities, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct.

Type of Activity	Identify Program Violations	Identify Administrative Error
Share/match data from other programs (e.g. TANF, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid))		
Share/match data from other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS))		
Run system reports that flag errors (include types)		
Review of attendance or billing records		x
Audit provider records		
Conduct quality control or quality assurance reviews	x	x
Conduct on-site visits to providers or sub-recipients to review attendance or enrollment documents		
Conduct supervisory staff reviews	x	x
Conduct data mining to identify trends		
Train staff on policy and/or audits		
Other. Describe		
None		

For any option the Lead Agency checked in the chart above other than none, please describe:

In January 2012, the use of the electronic case management and ledger system will allow the Lead Agency to run reports including but not limited to customer service, case flow processes, billing reports, expenditure vs obligation reports, case management reports. These reports will assist the CCA in quality control efforts and accountability of program staff through performance evaluations.

If the Lead Agency checked none, please describe what measures the Lead Agency has or plans to put in place to address program integrity:

the chart below which strategies, if any, the Lead Agency will use for each of the following areas: Unintentional program violations (UPV), intentional program violations (IPV) and/or fraud, and administrative error as defined in your State/Territory. **The Lead Agency has the flexibility to recover misspent funds as a result of errors. The Lead Agency is required to recover misspent funds as a result of fraud (98.60(i)).**

Strategy	**UPV**	**IPV and/or Fraud**	**Administrative Error**
Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment. Identify the minimum dollar amount: $ 1 0 0	x	x	
Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g. State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement). Describe:			
Recover through repayment plans	x	x	x
Reduce payments in the subsequent months	x	x	x
Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts			
Recover through other means. Describe:			
Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments. Describe composition of unit: The MS Dept of Human Services, Division of Program Integrity investigates improper payments.	x	x	x
Other. Describe:			

None			

For any option the Lead Agency checked in the chart above other than none, please describe:

Through the development and implementation of the Child Care Information System (CCIS), transactional child care activity can easily be monitored and analyzed to determine the possible misuse of funds, the existence of fraudulent behavior, and the reduction and/or prevention of improper payments. The database system contains several parameters and edit checks designed to reduce the possible occurrence of improper payments. The Lead Agency has also developed various internal control fiscal management reports that allow the CCA to obtain a “bird’s eye” view of child care transactions across the State of Mississippi. The reports are structured by federal regulatory guidelines. The subgrantees prepare and submit a monthly report to the Lead Agency, which are used in the development of monthly internal reports. In addition, the MDHS Department of Budgets and Accounting prepare reports quarterly. Thus, any significant irregularities in child care activity can easily be spotted and appropriate disciplinary actions immediately taken. Once possible improper payments have been identified, the Lead Agency will enact one of the following procedures: If the improper payment is the result of Administrative Error, the CCA is notified and corrective measures are taken to recoup funds. Recoupments are made in 100% of findings related to administrative errors. If the improper payment is the result of either intentional or unintentional program violations, the CCA is notified and the case is forwarded to the MDHS Division of Program Integrity for investigation. Recoupment efforts are made if it is determined that improper payments exceeding $100.00 exist.

1.3.5. What type of sanction, if any, will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations?

None

☐ Disqualify cient

☑ If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified

Any dispute concerning a question of fact under application/agreement which is not disposed of by agreement of the parties hereto shall be decided by the DECCD Director. In the review by the DECCD Director, the parent/provider shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and offer evidence in support of the questioned decision under review. This decision shall be reduced to writing and a copy thereof mailed or furnished to the parent/provider and shall be final and conclusive, unless, within thirty (30) days from the date of the decision, the parent/provider mails or furnishes the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services a written request for review. Pending final decision of the Executive Director or his designee, the program staff will proceed in accordance with the decision of the DECCD Director.

☑ Disqualify provider.

If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for providers

who are disqualified

Any dispute concerning a question of fact under application/agreement which is not disposed of by agreement of the parties hereto shall be decided by the DECCD Director. In the review by the DECCD Director, the parent/provider shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and offer evidence in support of the questioned decision under review. This decision shall be reduced to writing and a copy thereof mailed or furnished to the parent/provider and shall be final and conclusive, unless, within thirty (30) days from the date of the decision, the parent/provider mails or furnishes the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services a written request for review. Pending final decision of the Executive Director or his designee, the program staff will proceed in accordance with the decision of the DECCD Director.

xProsecute criminally

Other. Describe.

1.3.6 Based on responses provided from Question 14 in the most recent ACF-402 report, please describe those actions the Lead Agency has taken or plans to take to reduce identified errors in the table below. Territories not required to complete the Error Rate Review should mark

Activities identified in ACF-402	Cause/Type of Error (if known)	Actions Taken or Planned	Completion Date (Actual or planned) (if known)
	Unknown	1. The Scope of Services for the Designated Agents requires the internal review process mentioned in previous	1. Scope of Services was effective October 1, 2010. 2. A face-to-face meeting

Beginning February 1, 2012, the Lead Agency will perform internal reviews of the child care subsidy applications and all related supporting documentation, prior to the issuance of a child care certificate to ensure accuracy and completeness. In addition, subgrantee training will be conducted on the MDHS Child Care Policy Manual, including but not limited to compliance with federal/state policies and regulation related to the subsidy program, procedures for issues child care certificates, using CCIS and updated policies/regulations/procedures.		Column 1 until January 30, 2012. Beginning February 1, 2012, the Lead Agency will utilize the new web-based CCIS to review staff workflow and ensure proper implementation according to established program policies. 2. DECCD has held trainings in the form of face-to-face meetings, conference calls and webinars to accomplish its identified goal of training Designated Agents. Training for Lead Agency staff began in November 2011. 3. A change to the CCIS system was implemented to prevent program staff from advancing through the eligibility process until all required documentation has been received and entered.	was held in November of 2010. Additionally, conference calls/webinars were held in February, March, and June 2011 . 3. Changes to the CCIS system are currently still in development and testing. The Lead Agency anticipates that this will be complete early 2012.

1.4 Consultation in the Development of the CCDF Plan

Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies in the development of its CCDF Plan (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)).

Definition: *Consultation* involves the meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State or Territory CCDF Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments. (§§98.12(b), 98.14(a)(1))

1.4.1 Identify and describe in the table below who the Lead Agency consulted with in the development of the CCDF Plan (658D(b)(2), §§98.12(b), 98.14(b)).

Agency/Entity	**Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with this Agency/entity in developing the CCDF Plan**
Representatives of general purpose local government (required) This may include, but is not limited to: representatives from counties and municipalities, local human service agencies, local education representatives (e.g., school districts), or local public health agencies.	MDHS DECCD consulted with representatives from the County Board of Supervisors, Cities, towns, and municipalities. Some examples are the City of Jackson, Town of Bolton, Hancock County Board of Supervisors and the City of Starkville to obtain input on the development of the Mississippi State Plan and other policies and procedures relating to child care. Coordination involves child care and early childhood development services, utilizing certified spending offered by local or county government, state agencies, and municipalities as match for CCDF funds.
For the remaining agencies, check and describe (optional) any which the Lead Agency has chosen to consult with in the development of its CCDF Plan.	
State/Territory agency responsible for public education This may include, but is not limited to, State/Territory pre-kindergarten programs (if applicable), programs serving school-age children (including 21st Century Community Learning Centers), or higher education.	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.

State/Territory agency responsible for programs for children with special needs This may include, but is not limited to: State/Territory early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool), or other State/Territory agencies that support children with special needs	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.

State/Territory agency responsible for licensing (if separate from the Lead Agency)	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
State/Territory agency with the Head Start Collaboration grant	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
Statewide Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act	All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
State/Territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	
State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visitation programs grant	(Lead Agency is the recipient of these funds.)
State/Territory agency responsible for public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health)	Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare	Copies of the draft were provided to the Director of MDHS Division of Family & Children's Services for comments and recommendations.
State/Territory liaison for military child care programs or other military child care representatives	
State/Territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development	
State/Territory agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Copies of draft were provided to the Director of MDHS Division of Economic Assistance for comments and recommendations.

	Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations N/A: No such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	
Private agencies/entities including national initiatives that the Lead Agency is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide After-school Networks, Ready by 21		Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
Provider groups, associations or labor organizations		Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
Parent groups or organizations		
Local community organizations (child care resource and referral, Red Cross)		Representatives are members of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. All Council members were provided with copies of the draft State Plan for their comments and recommendations.
Other		

1.4.2. Describe the Statewide/Territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §§98.14(C)). At a minimum, the description should include:

a)Date(s) of notice of public hearing: 05/08/2011
Reminder - Must be at least 20 days prior to the date of the public hearing.

b) How was the public notified about the public hearing? The notification was posted on Lead Agency's website on 05/08/2011 and published in 12 newspapers. Notices were published in 05/18/2011 in the newspapers.c)Date(s) of public hearing(s): 06/02/2011
Reminder - Must be no earlier than 9 months before effective date of Plan (October 1, 2011).

d)Hearing site(s) June 02 Jackson, MS; June 03 Tupelo, MS
e)How was the content of the Plan made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s)? The draft was posted on the Lead Agency website on 05/10/2011
f)How will the information provided by the public be taken into consideration in the

provision of child care services under this Plan? All comments were collected and reviewed by**b**

the State Administrator for feasibility and incorporated, if possible.

1.4.3. Describe any strategies used by the Lead Agency to increase public consultation on the Plan or access to the public hearing. For example, translating the public hearing notice into multiple languages, using a variety of sites or technology (e.g., video) for the public hearing, holding the hearing at times to accommodate parent and provider work schedules.

1.4.3. Describe:

Using the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council as a source for comment for this Plan allows the Lead Agency to solicit input from a wide variety of stakeholders, who can provide valuable insight. Public hearings were advertised in one newspaper that has heavy statewide circulation, smaller newspapers and on the Lead Agency's website. A public hearing was held in a central area of the state after business and work hours to allow for participation by a wide audience. Another public hearing was held in the northern part of the state during lunch to encourage attendance and participation.

1.5. Coordination Activities to Support the Implementation of CCDF Services

Lead Agencies are required to *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services

Definition - *Coordination* involves child care and early childhood and school-age development services efforts to work across multiple entities, both public and private (such as in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or the State Advisory Council funded under the Head Start Act of 2007). (658D(b)(1)(D), §§98.12(a), 98.14(a)(1))

1.5.1. Identify and describe in the table below with whom the Lead Agency coordinates in the delivery of child care and early childhood and school-age services (§98.14(a)(1)).

Agency/Entity (check all that apply)	Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate with this Agency/entity in delivering child care and early childhood services	Describe the goals or results you are expecting from the coordination Examples might include increased supply of full-day/full-year services, aligned eligibility policies, blended funding, or access to more training and technical assistance resources shared across agencies.

	Representatives of general purpose local government **(required)** This may include, but is not limited to: representatives from counties and municipalities, local human service agencies, local education representatives (e.g., school districts), or local public health agencies.	The Lead Agency is the recipient of the Maternal, Infant and Child Health home visiting funds. Through the implementation of this program, coordination with LEAs, county health departments, county DHS offices, local law enforcement and local government representatives will be imperative.	The Lead Agency will coordinate with these entities to increase access to community resources such as TANF, SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, child care subsidy, CHiP, immunizations, child support, GED and alternative education options.
	State/Territory agency responsible for public education **(required)** This may include, but is not limited to, State/Territory pre-kindergarten programs (if applicable), programs serving school-age children (including 21st Century Community Learning Centers), or higher education.	The Lead Agency funds the Out-of-School Project which works with public and private school age care providers to offer mentoring and quality evaluation.	The Lead Agency's support of this program will result in increased support for and quality of existing school age care services.

	Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services **(required)**	Coordination will be achieved through the Lead Agency's participation in the Mississippi Department of Health's Expanding Opportunities Initiative.	Through participation, the Lead Agency is working to increase the number of quality inclusive learning environments for children with special needs.
	State/Territory agency responsible for public health **(required)** This may include, but is not limited to, the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health	Coordination will be achieved through the previously mentioned home visiting program and the Lead Agency's funding of the MS Child Care Resource and Referral Network's (MSCCR&R) child care provider training surrounding healthy development.	The Lead Agency's goals, in addition to the previously mentioned goals related to the home visiting program are to provide support to care givers in healthy social and emotional development of young children.
	State/Territory agency responsible for employment services / workforce development **(required)**	Coordination will include the MSCCR&R's child care provider professional development registry, CDA mentoring and scholarship program, child care director's credentialing program and the Mississippi Longitudinal Data System.	The Lead Agency expects to examine data across these programs to determine how assistance in workforce development can be provided.

	State/Territory agency responsible for providing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) **(required)**	Currently, the Lead Agency is coordinating with the MDHS Division of Economic Assistance on the development of a centralized application for child care subsidy and TANF.	The Lead Agency expects the use of a centralized application to decrease the enrollment period and allow for expedited service delivery.
	Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations (required) N/A: No such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	Coordination is achieved by working with Tribal Organization Representatives serving on the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council.	The Lead Agency's goal is to ensure all populations' needs are represented through the work of the Council.
For the remaining agencies, check and describe (optional) any with which the Lead Agency has chosen to coordinate early childhood and school-age service delivery			
	State/Territory agency responsible for licensing (if separate from the Lead Agency)	The Lead Agency funds the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure.	The Lead Agency's goal is to ensure healthy and safe environments for children through this collaboration.
	State/Territory agency with the Head Start Collaboration grant	The Lead Agency Coordinates with the Head Start Collaboration Office and the Mississippi Head Start Association.	The Lead Agency's goal is to align Head Start standards with licensing regulations.
	Statewide Advisory Council authorized by the Head Start Act	The State Administrator serves on the Council and works to include its efforts in the development of a statewide service delivery system.	The Lead Agency's goal is to have working collaborative partnerships for service delivery.
	State/Territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)		

	State/Territory agency responsible for programs for children with special needs This may include, but is not limited to: State/Territory early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and Section 619 for preschool), or other State/Territory agencies that support children with special needs	The Lead Agency Coordinates with the Mississippi Department of Health, Part C Coordinator and funds the Project IMPACT program.	The Lead Agency's goal is to improve the number of and access to appropriate inclusive learning environments for children with special needs.
	State/Territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visitation programs grant		
	State/Territory agency responsible for child welfare	The Lead Agency Coordinates with the MDHS Division of Child and Family Services	The Lead Agency's goal is to provide subsidy to children in protective and preventive care and foster children.

	State/Territory liaison for military child care programs or other military child care representatives		
	Private agencies/entities including national initiatives that the Lead Agency is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide After-school Networks, Ready by 21		
	Local community organizations (child care resource and referral, Red Cross)		
	Provider groups, associations or labor organizations		
	Parent groups or organizations		
	Other		

1.5.2. Does the State/Territory have a formal early childhood and/or school-age coordination plan? Lead Agencies are not required to have an early childhood nor a school-age coordination plan, but the State/Territory may have such plans for other purposes, including fulfilling requirements of other programs.

☐ Yes. If yes,

c) Indicate whether this entity also operates as the State Advisory Council (as authorized under the Head Start Act of 2007):

☐ Yes

☐ No

Provide a web address for the plan(s), if available:

☑ No

1.5.3. Does the State/Territory have a designated entity(ies) responsible for coordination across early childhood and school-age programs? (658D(b)(1)(D), §98.14(a)(1)) Check which entity(ies), if any, the State/Territory has chosen to designate.

☐ **State/Territory-wide early childhood and/or school-age cabinet/advisory council/task force/commission.**

If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency

☑ **State Advisory Council (as described under the Head Start Act of 2007 If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency**

In 2008, Governor Haley Barbour established the State Early Childhood Advisory Council of Mississippi to develop a strategic plan to coordinate efforts, programs, and resources supporting children birth to five years and to identify opportunities for and barriers to collaboration and coordination among programs and agencies.

The State Child Care Administrator was appointed by Governor Barbour to serve on this Council.

☐ Local Coordination/Council

If yes, describe entity, age groups and the role of the Lead Agency

❍the

☐ None

1.5.4 Does the Lead Agency conduct or plan to conduct activities to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private sector involvement in meeting child care needs? (§98.16(d))

☑ Yes .
If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the tangible results expected from the public-private partnership:

The Lead Agency plans to continue its non-competitive Child Care Partnership Program. The Child Care Partnership Program is a special initiative developed by DECCD to encourage partnerships in addressing employee/community child care needs. This is a federal matching grant program to encourage local commitment to child care through community-generated financial resources that can be matched with federal funds. Applicants eligible for consideration for a direct subgrant include local or county government, state agencies and municipalities, industries, consortiums and foundations. Some examples of current partnerships include:

- City of Jackson public/public partnerships
- City of Starkville has a public/private partnership
- Hancock County Human Resources Agency public/public partnerships
- Hinds Community College public/public partnerships
- Town of Bolton, public/public partnerships
- City of Vicksburg has a public/private partnership

These programs served 1780 children last year and projections indicate service to the same number for the upcoming year.

☐ No

1.6. Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

It is recommended, but not required, that each Lead Agency develop a plan to address preparedness, response, and recovery efforts specific to child care services and programs. Plans should cover the following areas: 1) planning for continuation of services to CCDF families; 2) coordination with other State/Territory agencies and key partners; 3) emergency preparedness regulatory requirements for child care providers; 4) provision of temporary child care services after a disaster; and 5) rebuilding child care after a disaster. For further guidance on developing Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans see the Information Memorandum (CCDF-ACF-IM-2011-XX) located on the Office of Child Care website at:
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/state_topic_emergency.htm

1.6.1. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of your efforts in this area. Check only ONE.

☑ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated and how the plan will be coordinated with other emergency planning efforts within the State/Territory.

☐ **Developed.** A plan has been developed as of **[nsert date]:** 03/00/2001and put into
operation as of **[insert date]:** 03/00/2009, f available. Provide a web address for this plan if available: www.childcareinfo.ms

☐ **Other**
.
Describe:

1.6.2. Indicate which of the core elements identified in the Information Memorandum are or will be covered in the Lead Agency child care emergency preparedness and response plan. Check which elements, if any, the Lead Agency includes in the plan.

☑ **Planning for continuation of services to CCDF families**

☑ **Coordination with other State/Territory agencies and key partners**

☐ **Emergency preparedness regulatory requirements for child care providers**

☐ **Provision of temporary child care services after a disaster**

☐ **Rebuilding child care facilities and infrastructure after a disaster**

None

PART 2

CCDF SUBSIDY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Administration of the Program

The Lead Agency has broad authority to administer (i.e., establish rules) and operate (i.e., implement activities) the CCDF program through other governmental, non-governmental, or other public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program. (658D(b), §98.11(a))

2.1.1. Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are set or established at the State/Territory versus the local level? Identify the level at which the following CCDF program rules and policies are established.

Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:

☑ State/Territory
☐ Local entity.
If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity:

☐ Other.
Describe:

Sliding fee scale is set by the:

☑ State/Territory
☐

Local entity.
If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity:

Other.
Describe:

Payment rates are set by the:

X State/Territory

Local entity.

If checked, provide the name(s) of the local entity:

Other.
Describe:

2.1.2. How is the CCDF program operated in your State/Territory? In the table below, identify which agency(ies) performs these CCDF services and activities.

Implementation of CCDF Services/Activities
Who determines eligibility?
Note: If different for families receiving TANF benefits and families not receiving TANF benefits, please describe:

☐

Agency (Check all that apply)

X CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Other State/Territory agency.

Describe:

Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments

Child care resource and referral agencies

Community-based organizations

Other.

Describe:

Who assists parents in locating child care (consumer education)?

Agency (Check all that apply)

X CCDF Lead Agency

X TANF agency

Other State/Territory agency.

Describe:_

The Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure

Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments Child care resource and referral agencies

Community-based organizations

Other.

Describe to whom is the payment issued (e.g., parent or provider) and how are payments distributed (e.g., electronically, cash, etc)

All payments are issued (pick up or postal mail) directly to the provider in the form of a check.

Other. List and describe:

2.2. Family Outreach and Application Process

Lead Agencies must inform parents of eligible children and the general public of the process by which they can apply for and potentially receive child care services. (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a)-(e). **Note** - For any information in questions 2.2.1 through 2.2.10 that differs or will differ for families receiving TANF, please describe in 2.2.11.

2.2.1. By whom and how are parents informed of the availability of child care assistance services under CCDF? (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.30(a)) Check all agencies and strategies that will be used in your State/Territory.

_X__CCDF Lead Agency
_X__TANF offices
_X__Other government offices
_X__Child care resource and referral agencies Contractors
_X__Community-based organizations
__Public schools
_X__Internet
(provide website):www.childcareinfoms

☑ Promotional materials Community outreach meetings, workshops or
☑ other in-person meetings

☐ Radio and/or television
☑ Print media
☐ Other.
Describe:

2.2.2. How can parents apply for CCDF services? Check all application methods that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

X In person interview or orientation
X By mail
X By Phone/Fax
Through the Internet
(provide website):

X By Email
Other.
Describe:

2.2.3. Describe how the Lead Agency provides consumer education to parents applying for CCDF assistance to promote informed choices about the quality of care provided by various providers.

Lead Agencies must certify that the State/Territory will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices (658E (c)(2)(G), §98.33).

For example, memorandums of understanding with resource and referral agencies to provide consumer education to families applying for CCDF assistance, providing parents with provider lists showing licensing history and/or Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) ratings, or informational brochures that address importance of quality and different care options available.

The Lead Agency provides informational brochures that demonstrate high quality child care. In addition, the Lead Agency funds the MSCCR&R which provides parent education and referral services for selecting child care options. The Lead Agency is currently updating information on their website to parents with a searchable database of QRIS participating center ratings.

2.2.4. Describe how the Lead Agency will support child care programs to increase the likelihood that CCDF-served children receive higher quality care as defined in your State/Territory.

For example, methods used to promote upward movement in quality rating and

improvement system, methods used to encourage high quality programs to participate inthe subsidy program such as tiered reimbursement, or incentives used to support highquality programs in rural, suburban, urban, and low-income communities.

The Lead Agency works to increase the likelihood that children receiving child care subsidies have access to higher quality care by providing quality bonuses for every child receiving subsidy to child care providers participating in the Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System (QRIS). The QRIS is a five starsystem providing 7% (two star), 17% (three star), 22% (four star) and 25% (five star) increases in totalmonthly subsidies. In an effort to support the provider's success in the QRIS, the Lead Agency conductsan annual Child Care Facility Needs Assessment and responds with resources, identified by providersand designed to increase star ratings. In addition, the Lead Agency funds professional development andtraining and technical assistance programs at no cost to participants.

2.2.5. How will the Lead Agency promote access to the CCDF subsidy program?Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory.

Provide access to program office/workers such as by:

Providing extended office hours

Accepting applications at multiple office locations

X Providing a toll-free number for clients

Other. Describe:

Using a simplified eligibility determination process such as by:

X Simplifying the application form (such as eliminating unnecessary questions, loweringthe reading level)

☑ **Developing a single application for multiple programs**

☑ **Developing web-based and/or phone-based application procedures**

☐ **Coordinating eligibility policies across programs.**

List the program names:.

☐ **Streamlining verification procedures, such as linking to other program data systems**

☑ **Providing information multi-lingually**

Including temporary periods of unemployment in eligibility criteria for new applicants(job search, seasonal unemployment).

Length of time: The Lead Agency currently offers 60 days of unemployment in eligibility criteria fornew applicants.

☐ **Other. Describe:**

Other.

Describe:

☐ None

2.2.6. Describe the Lead Agencies policies to promote continuity of care forchildren and stability for families. Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territoryhas chosen to implement.

☑ **Provide CCDF assistance during periods of job search Length of time: 60 days**

☐ **Establish two-tiered income eligibility to allow families to continue to receive child caresubsidies if they experience an increase in income but still remain below 85% of Statemedian income (SMI)**

☐ **Synchronize review date across programs List programs:**

X Longer eligibility re-determination periods (e.g., 1 year). Describe: Beginning January 1, 2012, Redetermination periods will be extended from six months to one year for all working clients.

☐ **Extend periods of eligibility for families who are also enrolled in either Early Head Start or Head Start and pre-k programs. Describe:**

☐ **Extend periods of eligibility for school-age children under age 13 to cover the school year. Describe:**

☐ Minimize reporting requirements for changes in family's circumstances that do notimpact families' eligibility, such as changes in income below a certain threshold or changein employment

☐ Targeted case management to help families find and keep stable child care arrangements

Using non-CCDF Funds to continue subsidy for families who no longer meet eligibility, such as for children who turn 13 years of age during the middle of a program year

❍ther.
Describe:

☐ None

2.2.7. How will the Lead Agency provide outreach and services to eligible families with limited English proficiency? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

☐ Application in other languages
☐ Informational materials in non-English languages
☐ Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
☐ Website in non-English languages
☐ Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
☐ Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
☐ Other
.
Describe:

☑ None

(Optional) If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please describe the languages offered :

2.2.8. How will the Lead Agency overcome language barriers with providers? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

☐
☐ Informational materials in non-English languages
☐ Training and technical assistance in non-English languages CCDF
☐ health and safety requirements in non-English languages
☐ Provider contracts or agreements in non-English languages
☐ Website in non-English languages
☐ Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
Other
.
Describe:
☑ None

(Optional) If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please describe the languages offered:

Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory. **Attach** a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program(s) as **Attachment 2.2.9** or provide a web address, if available:

The Lead Agency requires documentation of:	**Describe how the Lead Agency documents and verifies applicant information:**
Applicant identity	Current driver's license or state issued ID, birth certificate
Household composition	
Applicant's relationship to the child	Birth certificate, open child support case
Child's information for determining eligibility (e.g., identity, age, etc.)	Birth certificate
Work, Job Training or Educational Program	Employment: check stubs, or letter from employer if newly hired or paid in cash Education: verification of full-time enrollment from educational institution.
Income	Pay check stubs, and verification of receipt of other income such as child support.
Other. Describe:	Verification from the MDHS, Division of Child Support Enforcement that client is cooperating.
Child Support	

2.2.10. Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to assure the timeliness of eligibility determinations upon receipt of applications?

☐ Time limit for making eligibility determinations
Describe length of time

Track and monitor the eligibility determination process
☑ Other.
☐ Descri
be

☐ None

2.2.11. Are the policies, strategies or processes provided in questions 2.1.1. through 2.1.10 different for families receiving TANF? (658E(c)(2)(H) & (3)(D), §§98.16(g)(4), 98.33(b), 98.50(e))

☐ Yes.
☑ No.

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age. Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure, pursuant that TANF families with young children will be informed of their right not to be sanctioned if they meet the criteria set forth by the State TANF agency in accordance with section 407(e)(2) of the Social Security Act. In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care. **NOTE:** The TANF agency, not the CCDF Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record.

a) Identify the TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions:
State/Territory TANF Agency Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Economic Assistance

b) Provide the following definitions established by the TANF agency.

- "appropriate child care": A licensed center, a family day care home or an individual 18 years old or older chosen by the parent to care for their child(ren).
- "reasonable distance": Distance shall be considered reasonable if the day care center is within a 60 miles radius of parents home or work site.
- "unsuitability of informal child care": Reasons for unsuitable child care will be reported by the b parent to the Designated Agent. Complaints involving child abuse, neglect or an unsafe environment must be reported to the MS State Department of Health, Division of Child Care Facilities Licensure.
- "affordable child care arrangements": affordable child care arrangements are equal to or less than the established rate for the type of care based upon the child care subsidy Weekly Child Care Reimbursement Tiers.

c) How are parents who receive TANF benefits informed about the exception to individual enalties associated with the TANF work requirements?

- [x] In writing
- [ ] ✓verbally
- [ ] ❍ther.

Describe:

2.3. Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

In order to be eligible for services, children must (1) be under the age of 13, or under the age of 19 if the child is physically or mentally disabled or under court supervision; (2) reside with a family whose income is less than 85 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size; and (3) reside with a parent or parents who is working or

attending job training or an educational program; or (4) be receiving or needs to receive protective services. (658P(3), §98.20(a))

2.3.1. How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

residing with -

• living with, including taking meals and sleeping in the same house.

in loco parentis -

in place of parent, for example, a guardian or a relative or friend with whom the child resides if the child's parent is unable to act as the parent or has delegated his or her authority to someone else. The term describes someone who provides care and supervision like a parent but without going through the formalities of legal adoption or guardianship.

2.3.2. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Age

a) The Lead Agency serves children from 6 weeks to 13 years (maxmum age unde age 13).

b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☑ Yes,and the upper age is 19 years of age
Provide the Lead Agency definition of *physical or mental incapacity* -

a child under age 19 who meets the SSI definition of disability by having medically proven physical or mental condition(s) that cause marked and severe functional limitations expected to last at least 12 months in duration.

☐ No.

c) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is
☑ No.

2.3.3. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Work, Job Training or Educational Program

a) How does the Lead Agency define "working" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a

narrative description below, including allowable activities and if a minimum number of hours is required.

Reminder - Lead Agencies have the flexibility to include any work-related activities in its definition of working, including periods of job search and travel time. (§§98.16(f)(3), 98.20(b))
working-

Performing duties to earn a wage or complete educational/job training such as practicums or internships.

b) Does the Lead Agency provide CCDF child care assistance to parents who are attending job training or an educational program? (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

☑ Yes.
If yes, how does the Lead Agency define "attending job training or educational program" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a narrative description below.

Reminder - Lead Agencies have the flexibility to include any training or education-related activities in its definition of job training or education, including study time and travel time.

attending job training or educational program -

- education and/or training program resulting in a degree or certificate designed to promote job skills and employability

☐ No.

2.3.4. Eligibility Criteria Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

a) Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

☑ Yes.
If yes, how does the Lead Agency define "protective services" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a narrative description below.

Reminder - Lead Agencies have the flexibility to define protective services beyond formal child welfare or foster care cases. Lead Agencies may elect to include homeless children and other vulnerable populations in the definition of protective services.

Note - If the Lead Agency elects to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities for CCDF purposes these children are considered to be in protective services and should be included in this definition.

protective services

Children that are court ordered to receive Protective Services from DHS-DFCS. These children are living in the home of a parent or relative/kinship caretaker.

☐ No.

b) Does the Lead Agency waive, on a case-by-case basis, the co-payment and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

☑ Yes,
☐ No.

2.3.5. Income Eligibility Criteria

a) How does the Lead Agency define "income" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide the Lead Agency's definition of "income" for purposes of eligibility determination.(§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

income -

Income that is not supplemented by any public assistance other than food stamps or medical assistance, and does not exceed 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI).

b) Which of the following sources of income, if any, will the Lead Agency exclude from calculations of total family income for the purposes of eligibility determination? Check any income the Lead Agency chooses to exclude, if any.

☐ Adoption subsidies Foster
☐ care payments Alimony
☐ received or paid
☐ Child support received
☐ Child support paid
☑ Federal nutrition programs
☐ Federal tax credits
☐ State/Territory tax credits
☐ Housing allotments, Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or energy assistance
☑ Medical expenses or health insurance related expenses
☐ Military housing or other allotment/bonuses
☑ Scholarships, education loans, grants, income from work study
☐
☐
☐

Social Security Income
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
veterans benefits

☐ Unemployment Insurance
☑ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF
☐ Worker Compensation
☐ Other types of
income not listed above:

☐ None

c) Whose income will be excluded, if any, for purposes of eligibility determination? Check anyone the Lead Agency chooses to exclude, if any.

☐ Children under age 18
☐ Children age 18 and over - still attending school
☑ Teen parents living with parents
☐ Unrelated members of household
☑ All members of household except for parents/legal guardians
☑ Other
.
Describe:

Any parent/guardian who is over the age of 65.

☐ None

d) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below. **Complete** columns (a) and (b) based upon maximum eligibility initial entry into the CCDF program. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Reminder - Income limits must be provided in terms of State Median Income (SMI) (or Territory Median Income) even if federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. (§98.20(a)(2)). FY 2011 poverty guidelines are available at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11poverty.shtml.

Reminder - Income limits must be provided in terms of State Median Income (SMI) (or Territory Median Income) even if federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. (§98.20(a)(2)). FY 2011 poverty guidelines are available at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11poverty.shtml.

			IF APPLICABLE **Income Level if lower than 85% SMI**

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI)($/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI)($/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(c) $/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1		0		
2		2333.25		
3		2916.58		

4		3416.58		
5		3999.91		

e) Will the Lead Agency have "tiered eligibility" (i.e., a separate income limit at re-determination to remain eligible for the CCDF program)?

☐ Yes.
If yes, provide the requested information from the table in 2.3.5d and **describe below:**

Note: This information can be included in the table below.

☑ No.

			IF APPLICABLE **Income Level if lower than 85% SMI**	
Family Size	**(a)** **100% of State Median Income (SMI) ($/month)**	**(b)** **85% of State Median Income (SMI) ($/month)**[Multiply (a) by 0.85]	**(c)** **$/month**	**(d)** **% of SMI**[Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

f) SMI Year 2004 and SMI Source U.S. Census Data

g) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on:
October 2004

2.3.6. Eligibility Re-determination

a) What is the re-determination period upon initial authorization of CCDF services for most families?

___ 6 months

X__12 months

___ 24

months

X__ Other.

Describe:

Parents who are enrolled in an educational program must provide proof of enrollment each semester or quarter to remain eligible.

☐ Length of eligibility varies by county or other jurisdiction.
Describe:

b) Is the re-determination period the same for all CCDF eligible families?

☐ Yes.
☑ No. If no, **check the categories of families for whom authorizations are different and describe the redetermination period for each.**

☐ Families enrolled in Head Start and/or Early Head Start Programs
Re-determination period:

☐ Families enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs
Re-determination period:

☑ Families receiving TANF.
Re-determination period: Subsidy continues until TANF expires or is terminated by TANF caseworker.

☐ Families who are very-low income, but not receiving TANF
Re-determination period:

Other.
☐ Describe:

c) Does the Lead Agency use a simplified process at re-determination?
☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

2.3.7. Waiting Lists

Describe the Lead Agency's waiting list status. Select **ONE** of these options.

☐ Lead Agency currently does not have a waiting list and:

- ☐ All eligible families *who apply* will be served under State/Territory eligibility rules
- ☐ Not all eligible families *who apply* will be served under State/Territory eligibility rules

☑ Lead Agency has an active waiting list for:

- ☑ Any eligible family who applies when they cannot be served at the time of application
- ☐ Only certain eligible families.

Describe those families:

☐ Waiting lists are a county/local decision.
Describe:

☐ Other.
Descri
be:

2.3.8. Appeal Process for Eligibility Determinations

Describe the process for families to appeal eligibility determinations:

Families who wish to have their eligibility determination reviewed, must contact the Lead Agency. Upon receipt of request for review, the Lead Agency reviews family information and responds with a final determination.

2.4. Sliding Fee Scale and Family Contribution

The statute and regulations require Lead Agencies to establish a sliding fee scale that varies based on income and the size of the family to be used in determining each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) to the cost of child care (658E(c)(3)(B) §98.42).

2.4.1. Attach a copy of the sliding fee scale as Attachment 2.4.1. The

attached sliding fee scale was or will be effective as of: October 2004

2.4.2. Will the attached sliding fee scale provided as Attachment 2.4.1. be used in all parts of the State/Territory?

☑ Yes
☐ No.

If no, attach other sliding fee scales and their effective date(s) as **Attachment 2.4.2a, 2.4.2b,** etc.

2.4.3. What income source and year will be used in creating the sliding fee scale? (658E(c)(3)(B)) Check only one option.

☑ State Median Income,
Year: 2004

☐ Federal Poverty Level,
Year:

☐ Income source and year varies by geographic region.
Describe income source and

☐ year: Other.

Describe income source and year:

2.4.4. How will the family's contribution be calculated and to whom will it be applied? Check all that the Lead Agency has chosen to use. (§98.42(b))

Fee as dollar amount and
X Fee is per child with the same fee for each child

___Fee is per child and discounted fee for two or more children

X No additional fee charged after certain number of children

___Fee per family

____Fee as percent of income and
____Fee is per child with the same percentage applied for each child

____Fee is per child and discounted percentage applied for two or more children

____No additional percentage applied charged after certain number of children

_____Fee per family

Contribution schedule varies by geographic area
Describe:

☐ Other.
Describe:

If the Lead Agency checked more than one of the options above, describe:

2.4.5. Will the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

☐ Yes,
and describe those additional factors:

☑ No.

2.4.6. The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size. (§98.42(c)). Select **ONE** of these options.

Reminder - Lead Agencies are reminded that the co-payments may be waived for only two circumstances - for families at or below the poverty level or on a case-by-case basis for children falling under the definition of "protective services" (as defined in 2.3.4.a).

☐ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.
☐NO families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE required to pay a fee.
The poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is:
☑SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The Lead Agency waives the fee for the following

families:

The Lead Agency waives the fee for the following families:

Parents participating in an approved TANF activity.

2.5. Prioritizing Services for Eligible Children and Families

At a minimum, CCDF requires Lead Agencies to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, or in families with very low incomes. Prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., establishment of a waiting list or ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served). Lead Agencies may fulfill priority requirements in other ways such as higher payment rates for providers caring for children with special needs or waiving co-payments for families with very low incomes (at or below the federal poverty level). (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.44)

2.5.1. How will the Lead Agency prioritize child care services to children with special needs or in families with very low incomes? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.44) Lead Agencies have the discretion to define *children with special needs* and *children in families with very low incomes.* Lead Agencies are not limited in defining *children with special needs* to only those children with physical or mental disabilities (e.g., with a formal Individual Education Plan (IEP) required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)). Lead Agencies could consider children in the child welfare system, children of teen parents, or homeless children as examples of *children with special needs.*

Children with special needs

Provide the Lead Agency definition of *Children with Special Needs:*

Special Needs rates may be applied for children through the age of 18 who meet the SSI definition of disability by having medically proven physical or mental condition(s) that cause marked and severe functional limitations expected to last at least 12 months in duration and render the child(ren) incapable of self-care. The condition(s) must be documented by a physician. In the absence of SSI benefits, medical documentation should attest to the degree of functional limitation(s) and prescribe the special care needed.

Describe:

Children in families with very low incomes

Provide the Lead Agency definition of *Children in Families with Very Low Incomes:*

Income at or below the 50 percent of the State Median Income (SMI).

How will the Lead Agency prioritize CCDF services for:	Eligibility Priority (Check only one)	Is there a time limit on the eligibility priority or guarantee?	Other Priority Rules
Children with special needs	X Priority over other CCDF-eligible families __Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families ___Guaranteed subsidyeligibility Other.	Yes. The time limit is:	__Different eligibility thresholds.
		X No	X Higher rates for providers caring for children with special needs requiring additional care __Prioritizes quality funds for providers serving these children __Other. Describe
Children in families with very low incomes	X Priority over other CCDF-eligible families __Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families __Guaranteed subsidyeligibility Other.	Yes. The time limit is:	Different eligibility thresholds. Describe:
		X No	Waiving co-payments for families with incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Level X Other. Describe:
			n o n e

2.5.2. How will CCDF funds be used to provide child care assistance to meet the needs of families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF? (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4)) **Reminder** - CCDF requires that not less than 70 percent of CCDF Mandatory and Matching funds be used to provide child care assistance for families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF.

☑ **Use priority rules to meet the needs of TANF families (describe in 2.5.1 or 2.5.3.)**
☐ **Waive fees (co-payments) for some or all TANF families who are below poverty**
☐ **level Coordinate with other entities (.e. TANF office, other State/Territory agencies, andcontractors)**

❍**ther.**
Describe:

2.5.3. List and define any other eligibility conditions, priority rules and definitions that will be established by the Lead Agency. (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b)) Reminder - Lead Agencies are reminded that any eligibility criteria and terms provided below must comply with the eligibility requirements of §98.20 and provided in section 2.2. Any priority rules provided must comply with the priority requirements of §98.44 and provided in section 2.4.1.

Term(s) - Definition(s)

Describe:

None

2.6. Parental Choice In Relation to Certificates, Grants or Contracts

The parent(s) of each eligible child who receives or is offered financial assistance for child care services has the option of either enrolling such child with a provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of service or receiving a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(a))

2.6.1. Child Care Certificates

a) When is the child care certificate (also referred to as voucher or authorization) issued to parents? (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), §98.2, §98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2))

☑ Before parent has selected a provider
☐ After parent has selected a provider
☐ ❍the
r.

b) How does the Lead Agency inform parents that the child care certificate permits them to choose from a variety of child care categories, including child care centers, child care group homes, family child care homes, and in home providers? (§98.30€(2)).
__Certificate form provides information about choice of providers
__Certificate is not linked to a specific provider so parents can choose provider of choice
X_Consumer education materials (flyers, forms, brochures)
☐

Describe:

___Referral to child care resource and referral agencies
___Verbal communication at the time of application
___Public Services Announcement
X__ Agency
Website: www.childcareinfo.ms

____Community outreach meetings, workshops, other in person activities
____Multiple points of communication throughout the eligibility and renew process

_other.
Describe:

c) What information is included on the child care certificate? **Attach a copy of the child care certificate as Attachment 2.6.1.** (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))

__X Authorized provider(s)
_X Authorized payment rate(s)
X_ Authorized hours
X Co-payment amount
X Authorization period
❍ther.
Describe:

d) What is the estimated proportion of services that will be available for child care services through certificates?

Approximately 75% of subsidy funds are dispersed through certificates.

2.6.2. Child Care Services Available through Grants or Contracts

☑ a) In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency provide child care services through grants or contracts for child care slots? (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b)). **Note:** Do not check "yes" if every provider is simply required to sign an agreement in order to be paid in the certificate program.

Yes.

If yes, **describe** the type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts:

The Lead Agency has non-competitive subgrants with various entities to provide child care slots to children and families. These subgrants are administered by the City of Jackson, City of Starkville, City of Vicksburg, Hancock County Human Resources Agency, Hinds Community College, (Sanderson Farms, Inc, - Business Sponsored), Town of Bolton, Midtown Partners and the United Way of the Capitol Area.

☐ No

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to achieve any of the following? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory chooses to implement.

Increase the supply of specific types of care
Programs to serve children with special needs
☐ Wrap-around or integrated child care in Head Start, Early Head Start, pre-k summer o other programs
☑ Programs to serve infant/toddler
☐ School-age programs
☑ Center-based providers
☑ Family child care providers
☑ Group-home providers
☑ Programs that serve specific geographic areas
☑ Urban
☐ Rural
☐ Other.
Describe:
☐
☐

Support p rogrrms in providing higher quality services
Support programs in providing comprehensive services
Serve underserved families.
☑ Specify:
☐
☐
Other
.
Describe:
☐

c) Are child care services provided through grants or contracts offered throughout the State/Territory? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

Yes.

☑ No, and **identify** the localities (political subdivisions) and services that are not offered:
☐

d) How are payment rates for child care services provided through grants/contracts determined?

All rates are based on rates published by Lead Agency.

e) What is the estimated proportion of direct services that will be available for child care services through grants/contracts?

Approximately 25% of subsidy funds are dispersed through grants/contracts.

2.6.3. How will the Lead Agency inform parents and providers of policies and procedures for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds? (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31)) Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory.

- ☐ **Signed declaration**
- ☐ **Parent Application**
- ☐ **Parent Orientation**
- ☑ **Provider Agreement**
- ☐ **Provider Orientation**
- ☐ **Other.**

Describe:

2.6.4. The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care (i.e., care provided in thechild's own home) but may limit its use. (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv)) Will the LeadAgency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

- ☑ **No**
- ☐ **Yes. If checked, what limits will the Lead Agency set on the use of in-home care?Check all limits the Lead Agency will establish.**
- ☐ Restricted based on minimum number of children in the care of the provider to meet minimum wage law or Fair Labor Standards Act
- ☐ Restricted based on provider meeting a minimum age requirement
- ☐ Restricted based on hours of care (certain number of hours, non-traditional work hours)
- ☐ Restricted to care by relatives
- ☐ Restricted to care for children with special needs or medical condition
- ☐
- ☐

Restricted to in-home providers that meet some basic health and safety requirements
❍ther.

Describe:

2.6.5. Describe how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints about providers and makes substantiated parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32)

The Lead Agency and it's Designated Agents maintain written records of provider complaints. Beginning February 1, 2012 the Lead Agency will operate the CCDF program without the Designated Agents, at this time the previously mentioned new web-based case management system will contain a complaint tracking feature that will allow the CCA to examine customer service calls at any time. This system will track the call from entry to completion and reports regarding the calls can be generated. Copies of these records, excluding sensitive child information are made available to the public upon request.

2.7. Payment Rates for Child Care Services

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish adequate payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

2.7.1. Provide a copy of your payment rates as Attachment 2.7.1.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of: October 2007

2.7.2. Are the attached payment rates provided in Attachment 2.7.1 used in all parts of the State/Territory?

X Yes.

__No. If no, attach other payment rates and their effective date(s) as **Attachment 2.72a** ☐ **2.7.2b**, etc.

2.7.3. Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to ensure the timeliness of payments?

Policy on length of time for making payments.

Describe length of time:

X Track and monitor the payment process

__Other

. Describe:

☐ None

2.7.4. Market Rate Survey

Lead Agencies must complete a local Market Rate Survey (MRS) no earlier than two years prior to the effective date of the Plan (no earlier than October 1, 2009). The MRS must be completed prior to the submission of the CCDF Plan (see Program Instruction CCDF-ACF-PI-2009-02 http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/guidance/current/pi2009-02/pi2009-02.htm for more information on the MRS deadline).

a) Provide the month and year when the local Market Rate Survey(s) was completed (§98.43(b)(2)): 03/2011

b) Attach a copy of the **MRS instrument** and a **summary of the results** of the survey **as Attachment 2.7.4.** For Lead Agencies that use an administrative provider database, provide a copy of the intake form as the instrument. The summary should include a description of the sample population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings.

2.7.5. Will the Lead Agency use the local Market Rate Survey identified in 2.7.4a (i.e., the most recent MRS) to set its payment rates?

☐ Yes

☑ No.

If no, list the MRS year that the payment rate ceiling is based upon: 2007

2.7.6. At what percentile of the most recent local MRS are or will payment rates be set?

Provide the percentile for your payment rate ceiling in relation to the most recent survey and **describe:**

Note: Identify the percentile where payment rates fall according to the most recent local MRS (identified in 2.7.4a) regardless of whether or not you use the most recent survey to set rates. If the percentile(s) varies across categories of care (e.g., different for centers and family child care homes), regions or ages of children, provide the range of the highest and lowest percentile in relation to the most recent survey.

Because the amount of funding received fails to meet Mississippi's needs, payment rates will not be increased under this plan. See below for information regarding our current rates in relation to the 2011

MRS.

Age	Full Time/Part Time Care	Center-based/Home-based Care	% Range
Infants	Full	Center	87-78
Infants	Full	Home	74-53
Infants	Part	Center	74-53
Infants	Part	Home	46-32
Toddlers	Full	Center	87-79
Toddlers	Full	Home	70-51
Toddlers	Part	Center	70-51
Toddlers	Part	Home	52-38
Pre-School	Full	Center	87-80
Pre-School	Full	Home	67-48
Pre-School	Part	Center	67-48
Pre-School	Part	Home	58-41
School-age	Full	Center	95-89
School-age	Full	Home	65-47
School-age	Part	Center	65-47
School-age	Part	Home	72-52
Special Needs	Full	Center	96-90
Special Needs	Full	Home	79-57
Special Needs	Part	Center	79-57
Special Needs	Part	Home	72-53

2.7.7. Will the Lead Agency provide any type of tiered reimbursement or differential rates on top of its base reimbursement rates for providing care for children receiving CCDF subsidies? Check which types of tiered reimbursement, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement.

☐ **Differential rate for nontraditional hours Describe:**

☑ **Differential rate for children with special needs as defined by the State/Territory Describe:**

Refer to Attachment 2.7.1

☑ **Differential rate for infants and toddlers. Describe:**

☑ Differential rate for school-age programs
Describe:

Refer to Attachment 2.7.1

☑ Differential rate for higher quality as defined by the State/Territory Describe:

Refer to Attachment 2.7.1

☐ Other differential rate Describe:

☐ None

2.7.8. Will the Lead Agency allow providers to charge parents any additional fees? Check the policies, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to establish regarding additional fees.

_X_ Providers are allowed to charge the difference between the maximum reimbursementrate and their private pay rate
X Providers are allowed to charge registration fees
☑ **Providers are allowed to charge for transportation fees**
☑ **Providers are allowed to charge additional incidental fees such as field tips or**
☐ **supplies**
☑ **Providers are allowed to charge for meals**
☐ **Policies vary across region, counties and or geographic areas. Describe:**

☐ **No, providers may not charge parents any additional fees**
☐ **Other.**
Describe:

☐ None

2.7.9. Describe how payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full

range of providers based on the Market Rate Survey.

The Lead Agency approves a range of care environments including licensed/unlicensed and home/center-based. The approval of the range of care environments allows for parental choice. Parents are provided with a list of providers participating in the subsidy program in a given area upon request.

to child care services comparable to those provided to families not eligible to receive CCDF assistance. To demonstrate equal access, the Lead Agency shall provide at a minimum a summary of facts describing: (§98.43(a))

a) How a choice of the full range of providers, e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, group child care homes and in-home care, is made available (§98.43(a)(1)):

The Lead Agency approves a range of care environments including licensed/unlicensed and home/center-based. The approval of the range of care environments allows for parental choice. Parents are provided with a list of providers participating in the subsidy program in a given area upon request by the Designated Agents. Beginning February 1, 2012 the Lead Agency will operate the CCDF program without the Designated Agents.

b) How payment rates are adequate based on the most recent local MRS (§98.43(a)(2)):

Based on the Mississippi Child Care Market Rate Survey, which supplies information about tuition rates at licensed child care facilities in the state, MDHS DECCD adjusts payment of tier rates accordingly. The Lead Agency makes every effort to balance reimbursement rates with the number of applicants for assistance. Tier rates are evaluated every two years as a result of the Mississippi Child Care Market Rate Survey. In addition, the Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System (MCCQSS) facilitates an increase in the provider's current tier rate based upon steps attained in the MCCQSS. The increase in the tiered reimbursement is referred to as an "On-Going Quality Bonus" and the increase in tiered reimbursement does not have to be passed on to the general public.

c) How family co-payments based on a sliding fee scale are affordable (§98.43(a)(3)):

Co-payments for families whose income is at or below 50% of the SMI does not exceed 6.5% of the total family income per child. Co-payments for families whose income is between 50 and below 85% of the SMI does not exceed 8% of the total family income per child.

d) Any additional facts the Lead Agency considered to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access:

2.7.10 Goals for the next Biennium -

In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to identify at least one goal for the upcoming biennium. Lead Agencies are encouraged to include measurable and achievable goals. Lead Agencies may include existing goals (e.g., already identified in a State strategic plan or established by the Governor for a Lead Agency). ACF will target technical assistance efforts to help Lead Agencies achieve their goal(s). What are the Lead Agency's goals for the administration of the CCDF subsidy program in the coming Biennium? For example, what progress does the State/Territory expect to make on

continuing improved services to parents and providers, continuity of care for children, improving outreach to parents and providers, building or expanding information

technology systems, or revising rate setting policies or practices):

The Lead Agency is committed to serving the highest number of Mississippians possible with the greatest efficiency. Currently, the Lead Agency is working to improve the information and usability of our website for parents and providers. Additionally, the Lead Agency is working to increase the automation involved in application and payment processes to expedite service delivery, examining electronic sources for income and identity verification to alleviate the burden on parents and providers and developing a centralized application with other state services such as TANF and SNAP in order to streamline access.

PART 3

Health and Safety and Quality Improvement Activities

3.1. Activities to Ensure the Health and Safety of Children in Child Care (Component #1)

This section is intended to collect information on how Lead Agencies meet the statutory and regulatory provisions related to licensing and health and safety requirements. The CCDBG statute and the CCDF regulations address health and safety primarily in two ways.

First, Lead Agencies shall certify that they have in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the area served by the Lead Agency (§98.40(a)(1)). These licensing requirements need not be applied to specific types of providers of child care services (658(E)(c)(2)(E)(i). Lead Agencies must describe those licensing requirements and how they are effectively enforced. Second, Each Lead Agency shall certify that there are in effect, within the State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF.

The relationship between licensing requirements and health and safety requirements varies by State/Territory depending on how comprehensive the licensing system is. In some States and Territories, licensing may apply to the majority of CCDF-eligible providers and the licensing standards cover the three CCDF health and safety requirements so the State/Territory has few, if any, providers for whom they need to establish additional CCDF health and safety requirements. In other cases, States and Territories have elected to exempt large numbers of providers from licensing which means that those exempted providers who care for children receiving assistance from CCDF will have to meet to the CCDF health and safety requirements through an alternative process outside of licensing. The State/Territory may also elect to impose more stringent standards and licensing or regulatory requirements on child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the CCDF than the standards or requirements imposed on other child care providers. (§98.40(b)(1)) Section 3.1 asks the State/Territory to identify and describe the components of both the licensing and CCDF health and safety requirements, indicate which providers are subject to the requirements, and describe compliance and enforcement activities. (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41)

3.1.1. Compliance with Applicable State/Territory and Local Regulatory Requirements on Licensing

Lead Agencies shall certify that they have in effect licensing requirements applicable to

child care services provided within the area served by the Lead Agency (§98.40(a)(1)). These licensing requirements need not be applied to specific types of providers of child care services (658(E)(c)(2)(E)(i). Lead Agencies must describe those licensing requirements and how they are effectively enforced.

Definition: Licensing requirements are defined as regulatory requirements, including registration or certification requirements established under State, local, or tribal law, necessary for a provider to legally operate and provide child care services in a State or locality (§98.2). This does not include registration or certification requirements solely for child care providers to be eligible to participate in the CCDF program. Those requirements will be addressed in 3.1.2.

a) Is the Lead Agency responsible for child care licensing? (§98.11(a))

☐ Yes.

☑ No.

Please identify the State or local (if applicable) entity/agency responsible for licensing:

Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure

b) **Provide a brief overview** of the relationship between the licensing requirements and CCDF health and safety requirements in your State/Territory. At a minimum, describe whether the State/Territory's licensing requirements serve as the CCDF health and safety requirements.

Licensed Centers participating in the CCDF program must remain in compliance at all times with the Mississippi State Department of Health's "Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities." Unlicensed child care providers are required to sign a statement of agreement to comply with policy conditions related to: Basic Health , Safety, and Nutrition Assurances for Unlicensed Child Care Providers.

c) CCDF identifies and defines four categories of care: child care centers, family child care homes, group child care homes and in-home child care providers (§98.2). The CCDF definition for each category is listed below. Within each CCDF category of care, please identify which types of providers are exempt from licensing in your State/Territory in the chart below.

CCDF Category of Care	CCDF Definition (§98.2)	Are any providers in your State/Territory which fall under this CCDF category exempt from licensing?

Center-Based Child Care	Center-based child care providers are defined as a provider licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a non-residential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.	Describe which types of center-based settings are exempt from licensing in your State/Territory. For example, some jurisdictions exempt school-based centers, centers operated by religious organizations, summer camps, or Head Start programs None.
Group Home Child Care N/A. Check if your State/Territory does not have group home child care.	Group home child care provider is defined as two or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.	
Family Child Care	Family child care provider is defined as one individual who provides child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, as the sole caregiver, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)'s work. **Reminder** - Do not check if family child care home providers simply must register or be certified to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State/Territory regulatory requirements.	Describe which types of family child care home providers are exempt from licensing: Family home providers that care for five or fewer children
In-Home Care	In-home child care provider is defined as an individual who provides child care services in the child's own home. **Reminder** - Do not respond if in-home child care providers simply must register or be certified to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State/Territory regulatory requirements.	Describe which types of in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing: All are exempt

Note: In lieu of submitting or attaching licensing regulations to certify the requirements of §98.40(a)(1), Lead Agencies may provide their licensing regulations to the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. Please check the NRCKid's website at http://nrckids.org/ to verify the accuracy of your licensing regulations and provide any updates to the National Resource Center. **Check this box to indicate that the licensing requirements were submitted and verified at NRCKid's:** ☑

d) **Indicate** whether your State/Territory licensing requirements include any of the following four indicators for each category of care*.

*Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2003) Stepping Stones to Using Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, 2nd Ed. Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Available online: http://nrckids.org/stepping

Indicator	**Center-Based Child Care**	**Group Home Child Care**	**Family Child Care**	**In-Home Care**

Do the licensing requirements include **child:staff ratios and group sizes?** If yes, specify age group, where appropriate:	X Child:staff ratio	Child:staff ratio requirement:	X Child:staff ratio	Child:staff ratio requirement:
	child less than 1 year: 5:1; child 1 year:9:1; child 2 years old:12:1; child 3 years old:14:1; child 4 years old: 16:1: children ages 5-9 years old:20:1; children ages 10-12 years old;25:1	Group size requirement:	5:1	Group size requirement:
	X Group size	X No requirements.	X Group size	X No requirements.
	children under 12 mo and 12-24 mo: 10 with 2 caregivers; children 2 yrs: 14 with 2 caregivers; children 3 yrs: 14 with 1 caregiver; children 4 yrs: 20 with 2 caregivers; children 5-9 yrs: 20 with 2 caregiver; children 10-12 yrs: 25 with 1 caregiver		5 children maximum	
	No requirements.		No requirements.	

Do the licensing requirements identify specific experience and educational **credentials for child care directors?**	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED
	☑ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)
	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential
	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree
	☑ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree
	☐ No credential required for licensing	☐ No credential required for licensing	☐ No credential required for licensing	☐ No credential required for licensing
	☑ Other:	☐ Other:	☐ Other:	☐ Other:
	Two years of experience			

Do the licensing requirements identify specific experience and educational **credentials for child care teachers?**	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED	☐ High school/GED
	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)	☐ Child Development Associate (CDA)
	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential	☐ State/ Territory Credential
	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree	☐ Associate's degree
	☐ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree	☐ Bachelor's degree
	☐ No credential required for licensing	☐ No credential required for licensing	☑ No credential required for licensing	☐ No credential required for licensing
	☑ Other:	☐ Other:	☐ Other:	☐ Other:
	Three years documented experience working with children.			

Do the licensing requirements specify that directors and caregivers must attain a specific number of **training hours per year?**	At least 30 training hours required in first year	At least 30 training hours required in first year	At least 30 training hours required in first year	At least 30 training hours required in first year
	At least 24 training hours per year after first year	At least 24 training hours per year after first year	At least 24 training hours per year after first year	At least 24 training hours per year after first year
	No training requirement	No training requirement	X No training requirement	No training requirement
	Other:	Other:	Other:	Other:
		15 hours per year		

e) Do you expect the licensing requirements for child care providers to change in FY2012-2013?

Describe:

☑ No.

3.1.2. Compliance with Applicable State/Territory and Local Regulatory Requirements on Health and Safety

Each Lead Agency shall certify that there are in effect, within the State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF. Such requirements shall include the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization), building and physical premises safety, and minimum health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting. These health and safety requirements apply to all providers caring for children receiving CCDF services and which also may be covered by the licensing requirements. (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41)

a) **Describe** the Lead Agency's health and safety requirements for prevention and control

of infectious disease in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below. (658E(c)(2)(F)(i), §98.41(a)(1))

For each health and safety requirement checked, identify which providers under the CCDF category must meet the requirement. Check all that apply.				
The Lead Agency requires:	Center-based child care providers	Family child care home providers	Group home child care providers	In-home child care providers
Physical exam or health statement for providers				
Physical exam or health statement for children				
Tuberculosis check for providers				
Tuberculosis check for children				
X Provider immunizations	X	X		
X Child immunizations	X	X		
X Hand-washing policy for providers and	X	X		
X Diapering policy and	X			

X Providers to submit a self-certification or complete health and safety checklist	X			

Providers to meet the requirements of another oversight entity that fulfill the CCDF health and safety requirements				
Other. D e s c r i b e :				

b) **Describe** the Lead Agency's health and safety requirements for building and physical premises safety, including policies and practices to protect from environmental hazards, in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below. (658E(c)(2)(F)(ii), §98.41(a)(2))

The Lead Agency requires:	**Center-based child care providers**	**Family child care home providers**	**Group home child care providers**	**In-home child care providers**
XFire inspection	X			
XBuilding inspection	X			
XHealth inspection	X	X		
Inaccessibility of toxic substances policy				
XSafe sleep	X	X		
XTobacco exposure	X	X		
XTransportation policy	X			

XProviders to submit a self-certification or complete health and safety checklist	X	X		
XProviders to meet the requirements of another oversight entity that fulfill the CCDF health and safety requirements	X			
Other. D e s c r i b e :				

c) **Describe** the Lead Agency's health and safety requirements for health and safety training in effect for child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under CCDF using the table below. (658E(c)(2)(F)(iii), §98.41(a)(3))

CCDF Categories of Care	**Health and safety training requirements**	Pre-Service	On-Going
Child Care Centers	CPR (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	First Aid (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.

	Training on infectious diseases (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep) (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Medication administration (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Child development (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Supervision of children (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Behavior management (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.

	Nutrition (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Breastfeeding (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Physical activity (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Emergency preparedness and response (Child Care Centers)	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
	Other. (Child Care Centers) Describe: As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.	As described in the Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Child Care Licensure's Rules and Regulations Governing Child Care.
Group Home Child Care	CPR (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	First Aid (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.

	Training on infectious diseases (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep) (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Medication administration (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Child development (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Supervision of children (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Behavior management (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Nutrition (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Breastfeeding (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Physical activity (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Emergency preparedness and response (Group Home Child Care)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Other. (Group Home Child Care) Describe: No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
Family Child Care Providers	CPR (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	First Aid (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Training on infectious diseases (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.

	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep) (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Medication administration (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Child development (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Supervision of children (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Behavior management (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Nutrition (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Breastfeeding (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Physical activity (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	aNo requirements exist.
	Emergency preparedness and response (Family Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Other. (Family Child Care Providers) Describe: No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
In-Home Child Care Providers	CPR (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	First Aid (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Training on infectious diseases (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.

	SIDS prevention (i.e., safe sleep) (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.

	Medication administration (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Child development (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Supervision of children (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Behavior management (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Nutrition (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Breastfeeding (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Physical activity (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Working with children with special needs or disabilities (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Emergency preparedness and response (In-Home Child Care Providers)	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.
	Other. (In-Home Child Care Providers) Describe: No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.	No requirements exist.

d) CCDF allows Lead Agencies to exempt relative providers (grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles) from these health and safety requirements. What are the Lead Agency's requirements for relative providers? (§98.41(A)(ii))(A))

_X__All relative providers are subject to the same health and safety requirements as described in 3.1.2a-c, as appropriate; there are no exceptions for relatives.
____Relative providers are NOT required to meet any health and safety requirements as described in 3.1.2a-c, as appropriate.
___Relative providers are subject to certain requirements.
Describe the different requirements:

e) Provide a web address for the State/Territory's health and safety requirements, if available:

http://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/30,0,183,225.html

3.1.3 Enforcement of Licensing Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to provide a detailed description of the State/Territory's licensing requirements and how its licensing requirements are effectively enforced. (658E(c)(2)(E), §98.40(a)(2)) The Lead Agency is also required to certify that that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with the applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G), §98.41(d))

Describe the State/Territory's policies for effective enforcement of the licensing requirements using questions 3.1.3a through 3.1.3e below. This description includes whether and how the State/Territory uses visits (announced and unannounced), background checks, and any other enforcement policies and practices for the licensing requirements.

a) Does your State/Territory include **announced** and/or **unannounced** visits in its policies as a way to effectively enforce the licensing requirements?

☑ Yes. "Yes" please refer to the chart below and check all that apply
☐ No.

CCDF Categories of Care	Frequency of Routine Announced Visits	Frequency of Routine Unannounced Visits

X Center-Based Child Care	Once a Year	X Once a Year
	More than Once a Year	More than Once a Year
	Once Every Two Years	Once Every Two Years
	Other.	X Other.
	Describe:	Describe: As needed in response to reported concerns.
Group Home Child Care	Once a Year	Once a Year
	More than Once a Year	More than Once a Year
	Once Every Two Years	Once Every Two Years
	Other.	Other.
	Describe:	Describe:
Family Child Care Home	Once a Year	Once a Year
	More than Once a Year	More than Once a Year
	Once Every Two Years	Once Every Two Years
	Other.	Other.
	Describe:	Describe:
In-Home Child Care	Once a Year	Once a Year
	More than Once a Year	More than Once a Year
	Once Every Two Years	Once Every Two Years
	Other.	Other.
	Describe:	Describe:

b) Does your State/Territory have any of the following procedures in place for effective enforcement of the licensing requirements? If procedures differ based on the category of care, please indicate how in the "Describe" box.

☑ Yes. If "Yes" please refer to the chart below and check all that apply.

☐ No.

Licensing Procedures	**Describe** which procedures are used by the State/Territory for enforcement of the licensing requirements.
The State/Territory requires providers to attend or participate in training relating to opening a child care facility prior to issuing a license.	Yes.
	Describe:
	X No.
	Other.
	Describe:
Licensing staff has procedures in place to address violations found in an inspection.	X Providers are required to submit plans to correct violations cited during
	X Licensing staff approve the plans of correction submitted by
	X Licensing staff verify correction of
	X Licensing staff provide technical assistance regarding how to comply with a
	No procedures in place.
	Other.
	D e s c r i b e :

Licensing staff has procedures in place to issue a negative sanction to a noncompliant facility.	X Provisional or probationary license
	X License revocation or non-renewal
	Injunctions through court
	X Emergency or immediate closure not through court action
	X Fines for regulatory violations
	No procedures in place.
	Other.
	D e s c r i b e :
The State/Territory has procedures in place to respond to illegally operating child care facilities.	Cease and desist action
	Injunction
	X Emergency or immediate closure not through court action
	X Fines
	No procedures in place.
	Other.
	D e s c r i b e :

The State/Territory has procedures in place for providers to appeal licensing enforcement actions.	X Yes.
	Describe: Section 124.04 of the MS Dept of Health Rules and Regulations Governing Childcare states,124.06 Appeal: Any operator who disagrees with or is aggrieved by a decision of the licensing agency concerning the suspension, revocation, or restriction of a license may appeal to the Chancery Court of the county in which the child care facility is located. The appeal shall be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the operator receives written notice of the final administrative action by the licensing agency as to the suspension, revocation, or restriction of the license. The operator shall have the burden of proving that the decision of the licensing agency was not in accordance with applicable law and these regulations. If a facility is allowed to continue to operate during the appeal process, it will remain under the regulation of the licensing agency and will be subject to all current licensure regulations to include, but not limited to, inspection of the facility, review of facility and children's records, submission of all required or requested documents, and payment of all applicable fees and/or monetary penalties.
	No.
	Other.
	Describe:

c) Describe what types of licensing violations, if any, would make a provider ineligible to participate in CCDF:

Mississippi subsidy policies and procedures require licensed eligible facilities to remain in compliance with all rules and regulations for licensure. Documentation of non-compliance from licensure may result in temporary suspension of eligibility or permanent ineligibility.

d) Does your State/Territory use **background checks** as a way to effectively enforce the

licensing requirements?

☑ Yes.

If "Yes" please use refer to the chart below to identify who is required to have background checks, what types of checks, and with what frequency. Please **also provide a brief overview** of the State/Territory's process for conducting background checks for child care. For example, describe what types of violations would make providers ineligible for CCDF, funding for background checks, and the process for providers to appeal background check findings.

Forms are submitted to the Mississippi Department of Health for processing and response either upon employment (or application to be a subsidy eligible provider) or for renewal every five years.

☐ No

CCDF Categories of Care	Types of Background Check	Frequency

X Center-Based Child Care	X Child Abuse Registry	X Initial Entrance into the System
Who is subject to background checks for center-based care? For example, director, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers: All staff (including volunteers spending more than 120 hours in the facility in a calendar year) must to meet these requirement.		Checks Conducted Annually
		X Other.
		Describe: Every five years
	State/Territory Criminal Background	X Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	X FBI Criminal Background (e.g.,	X Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe: Every five years
	Sex Offender Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:

Group Child Care Homes	Child Abuse Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
Who is subject to background checks for group homes? For example, provider, non-provider residents of the home:		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	State/Territory Criminal Background	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	Sex Offender Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:

Family Child Care Homes	X Child Abuse Registry	X Initial Entrance into the System
Who is subject to background checks for family child care homes? For example, provider, non-provider residents of the home: All residents of the home over the age of 18 years.		X Checks Conducted
		Other.
		Describe:
	State/Territory Criminal Background	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	Sex Offender Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:

In-Home Child Care Providers	Child Abuse Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
Who is subject to background checks for in-home child care? For example, provider, non-provider residents of the home:		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	State/Territory Criminal Background	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	FBI Criminal Background (e.g., fingerprint)	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:
	Sex Offender Registry	Initial Entrance into the System
		Checks Conducted Annually
		Other.
		Describe:

e) If not performing visits (announced or unannounced) or background checks, describe how the State/Territory will ensure that its licensing requirements are effectively enforced per the CCDF regulations? (658E(c)(2)(E), §98.40(a)(2)):

Does not apply.

f) Does the State/Territory disseminate information to parents and the public, including the use of on-line tools or other "search tools," about child care program licensing status and compliance records?

☐ Yes.
Describe:

☑ No

3.1.4 Describe the State/Territory's policies for effective enforcement of the CCDF health and safety requirements. For providers who care for children receiving CCDF assistance and who are NOT subject to the enforcement procedures described above for licensed providers, please describe the health and safety enforcement measures in place. Include in this description whether and how the State/Territory uses on-site visits (announced and unannounced) and background checks and any other enforcement policies and practices for the health and safety requirements.

The Lead Agency requires all license exempt providers seeking approval to participate in the subsidy program to perform a health and safety self-assessment. Failure to complete this self-assessment will prevent a provider from becoming approved. In addition, all members over the age of 18 residing in the home where license exempt care is provided are required to submit to a Mississippi Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Check. Failure to comply will prevent a provider from becoming approved.

3.1.5 Does the State/Territory encourage or require child care programs to conduct developmental screening and referral for children participating in child care programs? Lead Agencies are not required to conduct developmental screenings of children, but are encouraged to work with child care providers to promote screening in the areas of physical health (including vision and hearing), mental health, oral health, and developmental disabilities..

☐ Yes.
Describe

a) If yes, are training, resources and supports offered to programs to assist them in ensuring that children receive appropriate developmental screenings?

☐ Yes.
Describe

☐ No

☐ Other.

Descri

be

b) If yes, are resources and supports provided to programs to help them understand how families are referred to indicated services and how to work with the health, mental health, and developmental disabilities agencies to support children when follow-up to screening is needed?

☐ Yes.

D e s c r i b e

___No

___Other.

Descri

be

X No

_Other

. Describe

3.1.6 Data & Performance Measures on Licensing and Health and Safety Compliance

- What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory currently have access to related to licensing compliance? What, if any, performance measures does the Lead Agency use for ensuring health and safety? The purpose of these questions is for Lead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked in (a) below, Lead Agencies may provide an optional description about the data they have access to (e.g., the Lead Agency may have data for only licensed programs, only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participating in quality improvement systems, or only for

certain age groups (e.g., infants and toddlers or school-age children).

a) **Data on licensing and health and safety.** Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

☑ Number of licensed programs Describe (optional):

☐ Numbers of programs operating that are legally exempt from licensing Describe (optional):

☑ Number of programs whose licenses were suspended or revoked due to non compliance.
Describe (optional):

☑ Number of injuries and fatalities in child care as defined by the State/Territory Describe (optional):

☑ Number of monitoring visits received by programs Describe (optional):

Caseload of licensing staff
☑ Describe (optional):

Number of programs revoked from CCDF due to non-compliance with health and
☑ safety requirements.
Describe (optional):

Other.
☐ Describe:

None.
☐ b) **Performance measurement.** What, if any, performance measures does the

State/Territory use in its licensing system to monitor compliance with CCDF health and safety requirements?

Policies for licensure and CCDF subsidy are aligned at this time. Compliance is monitored through annual licensing visits.

c) **Evaluation.** What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to licensing and health and safety? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

The Lead Agency sits on the Advisory Council for licensure and is working on evaluation efforts through this council.

3.1.7 Goals for the next Biennium - In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to identify at least one goal for the upcoming biennium. Lead Agencies are encouraged to include measurable and achievable goals. Lead Agencies may include existing goals (e.g., already identified in a State strategic plan or established by the Governor for a Lead Agency). ACF will target technical assistance efforts to help Lead Agencies achieve their goal(s). Lead Agencies are not required to establish a goal for each sub-section of 3.1. What are the Lead Agency's goals for the licensing and health and safety system in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make on core areas (e.g. licensing standards, monitoring visits or other effective enforcement, improved technical assistance, or fewer serious non-compliances?)

The Mississippi Department of Health, not the Lead Agency implements licensing in Mississippi, therefore; the Lead Agency cannot set goals for this program.

3.2 Establishing Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines (Component #2)

For purposes of this section, voluntary early learning guidelines include the expectations for what children should know (content) and be able to do (skills). The term *early learning guidelines* (ELGs) refers to age-appropriate developmental learning guidelines for infants and toddlers and school-age children. These guidelines are voluntary in that States/Territory are not mandated to develop such guidelines or implement them in a specified manner.

3.2.1 Has the State/Territory developed voluntary early learning guidelines for children? Check any early learning guidelines the State/Territory has developed.

☑ Birth-to-three
☑ Three-to-five
☐ Five years and olds
☐ None. **Skip to 3.2.6**

If yes, insert web addresses, where possible:
Birth to Three: Earlychildhood.msstate.edu; Three to Five: www.mde.k12.ms.us

Which State/Territory agency is the lead for the early learning guidelines?
Birth to Three: Mississippi Office of Head Start Collaboration; Three to Five: Mississippi Department of Education

3.2.2 Do the early learning guidelines cover a range of domains across physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development? Check all that apply for each age group as applicable in the chart below. Because States vary in their domain names and which domains to include, we have used the domains identified in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework for reference purposes.

Domains	**Birth-to-Three ELGs**	**Three-to-Five ELGs**	**Five and Older ELGs**
Physical development and health	X	X	
Social and emotional development	X	X	
Approaches to learning			
Logic and reasoning (e.g., problem-solving)		X	
Language development	X	X	
Literacy knowledge and skills	X	X	
Mathematics knowledge and skills	X	X	
Science knowledge and skills	X	X	
Creative arts expression (e.g., music, art, drama)			
Social studies knowledge and skills			
English language development (for dual language learners)			

	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

3.2.3 To whom are the early learning guidelines disseminated and in what manner? Check all audiences and methods that your State/Territory has chosen to use in the chart below.

	Information Dissemination	Voluntary Training	Mandatory Training
Parents in the child care subsidy system	X		
Parents using child care more broadly	X		
Practitioners in child care centers	X	X	
Providers in family child care homes	X	X	
Practitioners in Head Start	X	X	
Practitioners in Early Head Start	X	X	
Practitioners in public Pre-K program	X	X	
Practitioners in elementary schools	X		X
Other. List:			

3.2.4 Are voluntary early learning guidelines incorporated into other parts of the child care system? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory incorporates its early learning guidelines into other parts of the child care system.

☐ To define the content of training required to meet licensing requirements
☑ To define the content of training required for program quality improvement standards (e.g., QRIS standards)
☐ To define the content of training required for the career lattice or professional credential
☐ To require programs in licensing standards to develop curriculum/learning activities based on the voluntary ELGs
☐ To require programs in quality improvement standards to develop curriculum/learning activities based on the voluntary ELGs
☐ To develop State-/Territory -approved curricula
☐ Other.

☐ None

3.2.5 Are voluntary early learning guidelines aligned with into other parts of the child care system? Check the standards, if any, with which the State/Territory aligns its early learning guidelines.

☑ Cross-walked to align with Head Start Outcomes Framework
☑ Cross-walked to align with K-12 content standards Cross-
☐ walked to align with State/Territory pre-k standards Cross-
☐ walked with accreditation standards
☐ Other.

☐ None

3.2.6 Describe how your State/Territory uses ongoing assessments and measures of school readiness assessment using the following series of questions. In this section, assessment is framed with two distinct purposes/tools - 1) ongoing assessment of children's progress within the classroom to improve and individualize instruction (this corresponds to 3.2.6a) and 2) assessments conducted at kindergarten entry to inform policymakers about the school readiness of children across the State on a broad range of domains, used to guide program initiatives (this corresponds to 3.2.6b).

In the description for each Yes response, please include a) who administers, and b) how often assessments are conducted, and c) what assessment tools are used.

a) Are programs required to conduct ongoing assessments of children's progress of children using valid, reliable and age-appropriate tools aligned with the early learning guidelines or other child standards?
☐ Yes.
Describe:

b-1) If yes, are programs encouraged to use information from ongoing assessments to improve practice and individual children's needs?
☐ Yes.
Describe:

☐ No

☐ Other.
Describe:

b-2) If yes, is information on child's progress reported to parents?
☐ Yes.
Describe:

___No

_Other.
Describe:

X No

__Other.
Describe:

b) Does the State/Territory use tools that are valid, reliable and age-appropriate to track the readiness of children as they enter kindergarten?
☐ Yes.
Describe:

c-1) If yes, do the tools cover the developmental domains identified in 3.2.2? Yes.
D e s c r i b e :

☐ No

☐ Other.
Describe:

c-2) If yes, are the tools used on all children or samples of children?
☐ All children.
Describe:

☐ Samples of children

Describe:

☐ Other.

Describe:

c-3) If yes, is the information from the school readiness measures used to target program quality improvement activities?

☐ Yes.

Describe:

_X_ No

___ Other

Describe:

c) Is school readiness information linked to the statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS,program of the Department of Education)?

☐ Yes.

Describe:

☑ No

☐ Not applicable. State does not have an SLDS

3.2.7 Data & Performance Measures on Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines (Clickfor additional instructions)

a) **Data on voluntary early learning guidelines.** Indicate if the Lead Agency or anotheragency has access to data on:

☑ Number/percentage of child care providers tained on ELG's for preschool agedchildren.

Describe (optional):

☑ Number/percentage of child care providers trained on ELG's for infants and toddlers.
Describe (optional):

☑ Number of programs using ELG's in planning for their work
Describe (optional):

☑ Number of parents tained on or served in family support programs that use ELG's
Describe (optional):

Other.
☐ Describe:

☐ None.

b) Performance measurement. What, if any, are the Lead Agency's performance measures related to dissemination and implementation of the early learning guidelines?

The Lead Agency includes links to the Early Learning Guidelines on its' website.

c) Evaluation. What are the State/Territory's plans, if any, for evaluation related to early learning guidelines? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative validation of standards or program assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

Currently, the Lead Agency surveys licensed child care facilities annually about their use of the ELGs, and plans to continue to monitor usage in this manner.

3.2.8 Goals for the next Biennium -

In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to identify at least one goal for the upcoming biennium. Lead Agencies are encouraged to include measurable and achievable goals. Lead Agencies may include existing goals (e.g., already identified in a State strategic plan or established by the Governor for a Lead Agency). ACF will target technical assistance efforts to help Lead Agencies achieve their goal(s). What are the Lead Agency's goals for using voluntary early learning guidelines in the coming biennium? What progress does the Lead Agency expect to make related to early learning guidelines?

The Lead Agency is not responsible for the creation of the ELGs, but will continue to support their use by promoting ELG curriculum and training.

3.3 Creating Pathways to Excellence for Child Care Programs through Program Quality Improvement Activities (Component #3) (Click for additional instructions)

a) Describe which entities are involved in planning and administering the program quality improvement activities in 3.3, including State/Territory entities and local or community level entities.

The Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System is a star-based QRIS system currently funded by state funds and CCDF Quality funds. The Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute implements this program. The Lead Agency and MSU ECI collaborate on best practices related to this program's administration and implementation.

3.3.1 Element 1 - Program Standards

Definition - For purposes of this section, program standards refers to the expectations for quality, or quality indicators, which identify different levels of and pathways to improved quality. Minimum licensing standards and health and safety requirements provided in section 3.1 are also program standards but in this section, we focus on those standards that build upon and go beyond those minimum requirements.

a) Does your State/Territory's have quality improvement standards that include indicators covering the following areas beyond what is required for licensing? Check any indicators, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to establish.

- ☐ Ratios and group size
- ☐ Health, nutrition and safety
- ☑ Learning environment and curriculum
- ☑ Staff/Provider qualifications and professional development
- ☑ Teacher/providers-child relationships
- ☑ Teacher/provider instructional practices
- ☑ Family partnerships and family strengthening
- ☑ Community relationships
- ☑ Administration and management
- ☐ Developmental screenings
- ☐ Child assessment for the purposes of individualizing instruction and/or targeting program improvement
- ☑ Cultural competence
- ☐ Other.

Describe:

☐ None. If checked, **skip to 3.3.2**

b) Does your State/Territory have quality improvement standards with provisions about the care of any of these groups of children? Check any provisions your State/Territory has chosen to establish.

☐ Children with special needs as defined by your State/Territory

☐ Infants and toddlers

☐ School-age children Children who are

☐ dual language learners

☑ None

c) How do your State/Territory's quality standards link to State/Territory licensing requirements? Check any links between your State/Territory's quality standards and licensing requirements.

Licensing is a pre-requisite for participation

☑ Licensing is the first tier of the quality levels

☑ State/Territory license is a "rated" license.

☐ ❍t

☐ her

Desc

ribe:

☐ Not linke

d) Do your State/Territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards? Check any alignment, if any, between your State/Territory's quality standards and other standards.

☐ Programs that meet State/Territory pre-k standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or there is a reciprocal agreement between pre-k and the quality improvement system)

☐ Programs that meet Federal Head Start Performance Standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or there is a reciprocal agreement between Head Start and the quality improvement system)

☐ Programs that meet national accreditation standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, or an alternative pathway to meeting the standards)

☐ ❍ther.

Describe:

None

☑

Not linked **3.3.2 Element 2 - Supports to Programs to Improve Quality**

Definition - For purposes of this section, supports to programs to improve quality refers to such activities as technical assistance and consultation services for programs to assist in meeting child care quality improvement standards.

a) Check which types of and for what purposes the State/Territory uses supports to child care programs, if any, in the following chart. If none, **skip to 3.3.3.**

☐ None. **skip to 3.3.3**

Types and Purposes of Support	**Information or Written Materials**	**Training**	**On-Site Consultation**
Attaining and maintaining licensing compliance			
X Attaining and maintaining quality improvement standards beyond licensing	X	X	X
Attaining and maintaining accreditation			
X Providing targeted technical assistance in specialized content areas:			
Health and safety		X	X
Infant/toddler care		X	X
School-age care		X	X
Inclusion		X	X
Teaching dual language learners		X	X
Mental health		X	X
Business management practices		X	X

Other. Describe:			

b) Methods used to customize quality improvement supports to the needs of individual programs include:

- [x] Program improvement plans
- [x] Technical assistance on the use of program assessment tools
- [ ] Other.

Describe:

c) Is technical assistance linked to entering the QRIS or targeted to help programs forward on QRIS?

- [x] Yes.

Describe:

The MS Child Care Resource and Referral Network and the Allies for Quality Care program provide on-site technical assistance designed to improve a licensed program's rating in the QRIS.

- [ ] No
- [ ] Other.

Describe:

3.3.3 Element 3 - Financial Incentives and Supports

Definition - For purposes of this section, financial incentives refers to the types of monetary supports offered to programs in meeting and sustaining licensing and QRIS or other child care quality improvement standards for programs.

a) Identify which types of financial incentives are offered and to which providers in the following chart. Check which incentives and supports, if any, the State/Territory chooses to offer. If none, **skip to 3.3.4.**

- [ ] None. **skip to 3.3.4**

Types of Financial Incentives and Supports for Programs	Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes	License-Exempt Providers

Grants to programs to meet or maintain licensing			
Grants to programs to meet QRIS or similar quality level			
One-time awards or bonuses on completion of quality standard attainment			
X Tiered reimbursement tied to quality for children receiving subsidy	X		
On-going, periodic grants or stipends tied to maintaining quality			
Tax credits tied to meeting program quality standards			
Other. Describe:			

3.3.4 - Element 4 - Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Definition - For purposes of this section, quality assurance and monitoring refers to the ways that the State/Territory measures program quality for the purposes of its QRIS or other quality improvement system and the methods for measuring that the child care quality improvement standards for programs are met initially and maintained over time.

a) What tools, if any, does the State/Territory use to measure and monitor the quality of programs? Check all that apply and briefly describe using the chart below, including

which programs are required to participate and the frequency of assessments. **If none, skip to 3.3.5.**

☐ None. **skip to 3.35**

Types of Program Quality Assessment Tools		Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes	License-Exempt Providers
X	Environment Rating Scales (e.g., ECERS, ITERS, SACERS, FDCRS) Describe, including frequency of assessments. Pre/Post	XInfant/Toddler XPreschool School-Age		
	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Describe, including frequency of assessments.		N/A	
	Program Administration Scale (PAS) for child care centers or Business Administration Scale (BAS) for family child care homes Describe, including frequency of assessments.			
	Customized instrument, including submission of written documentation, developed for State/Territory quality improvement system. This may include instruments developed for quality improvements in 21st Century Learning Center programs Describe, including frequency of assessments.			
	Other. Describe:			

b) What steps, if any, has the State/Territory taken to align quality assurance and monitoring across funding streams and sectors in order to minimize duplication?

- [x] Have a mechanism to track different quality assessments/monitoring activities to avoi duplication
- [ ] Include QRIS or other quality reviews as part of licensing enforcement
- [ ] Have compliance monitoring in one sector (e.g., Head Start/Early Head Start, State/Territory pre-k) serve as validation for compliance with quality improvement system

___Have a mechanism to tack different quality assessments/monitoring activities to avoid duplication
___Include QRIS or other quality reviews as part of licensing enforcement
___Have compliance monitoring in one sector (e.g., Head Start/Early Head Start, State/Territory pre-k) serve as validation for compliance with quality improvement system

(e.g., QRIS) without further review

☐ Have monitoring for meeting accreditation standards serve as validation for compliance with quality improvement system (e.g., QRIS) without further review

☐ Other.

Describe:

☐ None

3.3.5 - Element 5 - Outreach and Consumer Education

Definition - For purposes of this section, outreach and consumer education refers to the strategies used to promote the child care quality improvement standards to parents, programs and the general public.

a) Does the State/Territory use symbols or simple icons to communicate levels of quality for child care programs beyond what may communicated to parents about licensing status and licensing compliance as reported in 3.1.3? (e.g. stars, or gold/silver/bronze levels).

☑ Yes. If yes, how is it used?

☐ Resource and referral/consumer education services use with parents seeking care

☐ Parents enrolling in child care subsidy are educated about the system and the quality level of the provider that they are selecting

☐ Searchable database on the web

☑ Voluntarily, visibly posted in programs

☐ Mandatory to post visibly in programs

☑ Used in marketing and public awareness campaigns

☐

☐ No. no, **skip to 3.3.6**

b) Does the State/Territory use any forms of media to reach parents and the public to communicate about levels of quality for child care programs? Check which forms, if any, the State/Territory uses to communicate levels of quality for child care programs.

☑ Print

☐ Radio

☑ Television

☑ Web

☐ Telephone

☐ Social Marketing

☐ Other.

Describe:

☐ None.

c) Describe any targeted outreach for culturally and linguistically diverse families.

The Lead Agency has developed print media to illustrate what a quality child care environment looks like through photographs and very few words. This is designed for non-English speaking parents and low-literacy parents.

3.3.6. Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

a) **Based on the five key elements of a QRIS described above in 3.3.1 through 3.3.5,** does your State/Territory have a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) or similar quality improvement system in place?

☑ Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS or similar quality improvement system that includes linked activities in all five elements operating State/Territory-wide.

☑ Participation is voluntary for:

All licensed facilities

☐ Participation is mandatory for:

☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS or smilar quality improvement system thatincludes linked activities in all five elements operating as a pilot or in a few localities butnot State/Territory-wide.

☐ No, the State/Territory does not have a QRIS or smilar quality improvement systemthat includes linked activities in all five elements.

☐ State/Territory is in the development phase
☐ State/Territory has no plans for developme

☐

Other.

Describe:
State/Territory is in the development phase
State/Territory has no plans for development

b) If yes to 3.3.6a, **CHECK** the types of providers eligible to participate in the QRIS:

☑ Child care centers

☐ Group child care homes

☐ Family child care homes

☐
License exempt providers

☐
Early Head Start programs

☑
Head Start programs

☑
Pre-kindergarten programs

☐
School-age programs

☐
Other.

Describe:

3.3.7. If the State/Territory has or will have any quality improvement strategies for targeted groups of providers (e.g., relative caregivers or caregivers who are legally exempt from licensing) that are not described in your responses to any question in section 3.3 above,

please describe:

At this time, the Lead Agency is working with the Mississippi State University Extension Service to pilot a QRIS program for out-of-school programs and for license-exempt providers.

3.3.8 Data & Performance Measures on Program Quality (Click for additional instructions)

a) Data on program quality. Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency has access to data on:

☑
Data on the quality level for individual programs (e.g. QRIS level) as defined by your State/Territory.

Describe:

ERS software currently tracks all QRIS program activity. This data is housed at the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute

☑ Number of programs that move program quality levels annually (up or down).

Describe:

ERS software currently tracks all QRIS program activity. This data is housed at the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute

☐ Program scores on program assessment instruments.

List instruments:

Describe:

☑ Classroom scores on program assessment instruments.

List instruments:

ITERS-R, ECERS-R

Describe:

ERS software currently tracks all QRIS program activity. This data is housed at the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute

☑ Qualifications for teachers or caregivers within each program.

Describe:

This information is maintained by the Professional Development registry housed at the MS Child Care Resource & Referral Network

☑ Number/Percentage of children receiving CCDF assistance in licensed care.

Describe:

The Lead Agency houses the Child Care Information System (CCIS).

☑ Number/percentage of children receiving CCDF assistance who attend care at each of the tiers of the quality as defined by the State/Territory

☑ Number/Percentage of programs receiving financial assistance to meet higher program standards.

Describe:

The Lead Agency houses the Child Care Information System (CCIS).

☐ Other.

Describe:

☐ None.

b) Performance measurement. What, if any, are the Lead Agency's performance measures on program quality?

The Lead Agency does not implement the QRIS program and does not measure program quality.

c) Evaluation. What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to program quality? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

The Lead Agency does not implement the QRIS program and does not evaluate program quality.

3.3.9 Goals for the next Biennium -

In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to identify at least one goal for the upcoming biennium. Lead Agencies are encouraged to include measurable and achievable goals. Lead Agencies may include existing goals (e.g., already identified in a State strategic plan or established by the Governor for a Lead Agency). ACF will target technical assistance efforts to help Lead Agencies achieve their goal(s). Lead Agencies are not

required to establish a goal for each sub -section in 3.3. What are the State/Territory's goals for the program quality improvement system in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make across the five key elements for quality improvement systems?

The Lead Agency does not implement the QRIS program in Mississippi and cannot set goals for this program. The Lead Agency will continue to support caregivers' participation in this program through training and technical assistance.

3.4 Pathways to Excellence for the Workforce - Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (Component #4)

Pathways to excellence for the workforce builds on the significant investments States and Territories have made in the area of professional development systems to ensure a well-qualified workforce with opportunities for growth from entry level through master teacher, with an increasing emphasis on the many additional roles in the child care system (e.g. adult educators such as consultants, technical assistance providers, trainers, and higher education faculty). In this section, States and Territories provide a self-assessment on current professional development and workforce activities and describe their goals for the upcoming Biennium.

For purposes of this section, States and Territories will respond according to five key elements for workforce systems:

1) Core Knowledge and Competencies
2) Career Pathways (or Career Lattice)
3) Professional Development Capacity
4) Access to Professional Development
5) Compensation, Benefits and Workforce Conditions

a) Describe which entities are involved in planning and administering the activities in Section 3.4, including State/Territory entities and local or community level entities.

Mississippi is beginning to engage in discussions surrounding these activities through the work of the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council. At this time the Lead Agency supports access to professional development by funding the Mississippi Child Care Resource and Referral Network and other programs to offer professional development training offered at no cost to participants

3.4.1 Workforce Element 1 - Core Knowledge and Competencies

Definition - For purposes of this section, core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) refers to the expectations for what the workforce should know (content) and be able to do (skills) in their role working with and/or on behalf of children and their families. These CKCs provide a foundation for professional development design (including instructional

practices) and other quality improvement efforts.

a) Has the State/Territory developed core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) for practitioners working with and/or on behalf of children?

☐ Yes

☑ No, the State/Territory has not developed core knowledge and competencies. **Skip to question 3.4.2.**

☐ Other.

Describe:

b) Check which of the following teaching and learning topics, if any, are covered in the CKCs.

☐ Child growth, development and learning

☐ Health, nutrition, and safety

☐ Learning environment and curriculum

☐ Interactions with children

☐ Family and community relationships

☐ Professionalism and leadership

☐ Observation and assessment

Program planning and management

Diversity

Other.

Describe:

☐

None

c) Are the CKCs incorporated into other parts of the child care system? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory incorporates its CKCs into other parts of the child care system.

☐ To define the content of training required to meet licensing requirements

☐ To define the content of training required for program quality improvement standards(as reported in section 3.3)

To define the content of training required for the career lattice or credential
To correspond to the early learning guidelines
To define curriculum and degree requirements at institutions of higher education

☐ ❍ the
r.
Describe:

☐
None

d) Are the CKCs aligned with other State/Territory or national standards? Check which ways, if any, the State/Territory aligns its CKCs with other standards.

☐
☐ Cross-walked with the Child Development Associate (CDA) competencies Cross-walked with national teacher preparation standards (e.g., NAEYC standards for early childhood professional preparation, National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, Head Start SOLAR staff skills indicators)

☐
☐ Cross-walked with apprenticeship competencies
❍ ther.
Describe:

☐
None

e) Check for which roles, if any, the State/Territory developed supplemental or specialized competencies.

☐ Staff working directly with children in centers, ncluding aides, assistants, teachers master teachers.
Describe:

☐ Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and
assistants.
Describ
e:

☐

Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors).
Describe:

Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches, consultants, home visitors, etc.).

☐

Describe:

☐ Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty).
Describe:

☐ ❍ the
r.
Describe:

☐ None

f) Check if the State/Territory has developed any supplemental or specialized competencies for practitioners/providers working with the following ages.

☐ Birth-to-three
☐ Three-to-five
☐ Five and older
☐ ❍ the
r.
Describe:

☐ None **3.4.2 Workforce Element 2 - Career**

Pathways

Definition - For purposes of this section, career pathways (or career lattice) defines the options and sequence of qualifications and ongoing professional development to workwith children. Career pathways assist professionals in understanding their career optionsand identify steps for advancement for the workforce recognizing and rewarding higherlevels of preparation and mastery of practice to promote higher quality services forchildren.

a) Does the State/Territory have a career pathway which defines the sequence of qualifications related to professional development (education, training and technical assistance) and experience required to work with children?

☐ Yes.

Describe:

☑ No, the State/Territory has not developed a career pathway. **Skip to question 3.4.3**

b) Check for which roles, if any, the career pathway (or lattice) include qualifications, specializations or credentials.

☐ Staff working directly with children in centers, including aides, assistants, teachers master teachers.

Describe:

☐ Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and assistants.

Describe:

☐ Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors).

Describe:

☐ Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches, consultants, home visitors, etc.).

Describe:

☐ Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty).

Describe:

☐ Other.

Describe:

☐ None

c) Does the career pathway (or lattice) include specializations or credentials, if any, for working with any of the following children?

Describe:

☐ Infants and toddlers

☐ Preschoolers

☐ School-age children
☐ Dual language learners
☐ Children with disabilities, children with developmental delays, and children with othe special needs
☐ ❍ther.
Describe:

☐ None

d) In what ways, if any, is the career pathway (or lattice) used?

☐ voluntary guide and planning resource
☐ Required placement for all practitioners and providers working in programs that are licensed or regulated in the State/Territory to serve children birth to 13
☐ Required placement for all practitioners working in programs that receive public funds to serve children birth to 13
☐ Required placement for adult educators (.e., those that provide training, education and/or technical assistance)
☐ Required placement for participation in scholarship and/or other incentive and support programs
☐ Required placement for participation in the QRIS or other quality improvement system
☐ ❍ ther.
Describe:

☐ None

e) Are individuals' qualifications, professional development, and work experience verifiedprior to placement on the career pathway (or lattice?)?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☐ No

3.4.3 Workforce Element 3 - Professional Development Capacity

Definition - For purposes of this section, professional development incorporates higher education, training and technical assistance. Higher education capacity refers to capability of the higher education system to meet the needs of the diverse workforce including the provision of content that addresses the full range of development and needs of children. Training and technical assistance capacity refers to capability of the training

and technical assistance system to meet the needs of the diverse workforce including the

provision of content that addresses the full range of development and needs of children.

a) Has the State/Territory assessed the availability of degree programs in early-childhood education, school-age care or youth development, and related fields in the State/Territory (e.g., both physical location and distance-based, accessibility to practitioners, etc.)?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

b) Has the State/Territory assessed the availability of early-childhood and school-age andrelated training and technical assistance programs in the State/Territory (e.g., bothphysical location and distance-based, degree level, etc.)?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

c) What quality assurance mechanisms, if any, are in place for the degree programs andcourses offered by the State/Territory institutions?

☑ Standards set by the institution
☑ Standards set by the State/Territory higher education board
☐ Standards set by program accreditors
☐ ❍ Other.
Describe:

☐ None

d) What quality assurance mechanisms, if any, are in place for the training and technicalassistance programs offered by the State/Territory?

☐ Training approval process.
Describe:

☐ Trainer approval process.
Describe:

☑ Training and/or technical assistance evaluations
Describe:

All T&TA providers are evaluated by supervisors at least monthly.

☐ Other.
Describe:

☐ None

e) Does the State/Territory have articulation agreements in place across and within institutions of higher education?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

f) Does the State/Territory have articulation agreements that translate training and/or technical assistance into higher education credit?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

3.4.4 Workforce Element 4 - Access to Professional Development

Definition - For purposes of this section, access to professional development (training, education and technical assistance) refers to the degree to which practitioners are made aware of, and receive supports and assistance to utilize, professional development opportunities.

a) Does the State/Territory have professional development opportunities accessible for professionals in various or all sectors of the early childhood and school-age field?

☑ Yes. If yes, for which sectors?

☑ Child care
☑ Head Start/Early Head Start
☑ Pre-Kindergarten
☐ Public schools
☑ Early intervention/special education
☐ ❍the
r.
Describe:

☐
No

b) Does the State/Territory have a State/Territory-wide, coordinated and easily accessible clearinghouse of information about professional development opportunities available to all members of the early childhood and school-age workforce? Lead Agencies are notrequired to have a professional development system, but States/Territories may developsuch clearinghouses to promote access to professional development opportunities.

☑
Yes.
If yes, describe:

This information is disseminated through the Mississippi Child Care Resource and Referral Network

☐
No

sucares.com/childcare

c) What supports, if any, does the State/Territory provide to promote access to training and education activities?

☑ Scholarships
. Describe:

For teachers to receive a CDA

☑ Free training and education
Describe:

All training and technical assistance are offered at no charge to participants

☐ Reimbursement for training and education expenses.
Describe:

☐ Grants
. Describe:

☐ Loans
.
Descri
be:

☐
Loan forgiveness programs
Describe:

☐
Substitute
pools Describe:

☐
Release time
Describe:

☐ Other
.
Describe:

☐
None

d) Does the State/Territory have career advisors for early childhood and school-age practitioners?

☐
Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑
No

e) Does the State/Territory have mentors, coaches, consultants, and/or other specialists available to provide technical assistance to the workforce?

☑ Yes.
If yes, describe:

The Lead Agency funds several programs that provide mentoring and coaching to the workforce.

Programs include the MS Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Allies for Quality Care, CDA Scholarship Program, Nurturing Homes Initiative, Partners for Quality Care and Project PREPARE.

☐ No

3.4.5 Workforce Element 5 - Compensation, Benefits and Workforce Conditions
Definition - For purposes of this section, rewards for education and training refers to any financial supports provided to practitioners for participating in and completing education or training or for increasing compensation.

a) Does the State/Territory have a salary or wage scale for various professional roles?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

b) Does the State/Territory provide financial rewards for participation in professional development, such as one-time salary bonuses for completing a training or education program?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

c) Does the State/Territory provide sustained financial support on a periodic, predictable basis, such as annual wage supplements, based on the highest level of training and education achieved?

☐ Yes.
If yes, describe:

☑ No

d) Does the State/Territory have a program to offer or facilitate benefits (e.g. health insurance coverage, retirement, etc.) to the workforce?

☐ Yes.

If yes, describe:

☑ No

3.4.6 Data & Performance Measures on the Child Care Workforce - What data elements, if any, does the State/Territory currently have access to related to the child care workforce? What, if any, does the State/Territory use for performance measures on professional development and workforce initiatives? The purpose of these questions is forLead Agencies to provide a description of their capacity to provide information, not to require Lead Agencies to collect or report this information. For any data elements checked in (a) below, Lead Agencies may provide an optional description about the datathey have access to (e.g., the Lead Agency may have data for only licensed programs,only programs caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies, only providers participatingin quality improvement systems, or only for certain age groups (e.g., infants and toddlersor school-age children).

a) Data on the child care workforce. Indicate if the Lead Agency or another agency hasaccess to data on:

☑ Data on the sze of the child care workforce Describe (optional):

☐ Data on the demographic characteristics of practitioners or providers working directly with children. Describe (optional):

☑ Records of individual teachers or caregivers and their qualifications Describe (optional):

☐ Retention rates. Describe (optional):

☐

Describe (optional):

☐

Qualifications of teachers or caregivers linked to the programs in which they teach
Describe (optional):

☑

Number of scholarships awarded .
Describe (optional):

☐

Number of individuals receiving bonuses or other financial rewards or incentives.
Describe (optional):

☐

Number of credentials and degrees conferred annually
Describe (optional):

☑

Data on T/TA completion or attrition rates.
Describe (optional):

☐ Data on degree completion or attrition rates.
Describe (optional):

☐ ❍ the
r.
Descri
be:

☐

None

professional development for practitioners working with children birth to age 13?

Definition - For purposes of this section, a workforce data system refers to a system,such as a workforce registry, that tracks the size and characteristics of the child careworkforce, including longitudinal data to monitor changes over time. The data system alsocan produce records to validate and verify qualifications or ongoing professionaldevelopment for licensing, accreditation, QRIS, wage incentives, and credentials.

☐ Yes.

b-1) If yes, which roles are included in the workforce data system? For each role checked, indicate in your description whether participation is voluntary or mandatory.

☐ Staff working directly with children in centers, including aides, assistants, teachers master
teachers.
Describe:

☐ Providers working directly with children in family child care homes, including aides and
assistants.
Describ
e:

☐

Administrators in centers (including educational coordinators, directors).
Describe:

☐

Technical assistance providers (including mentors, coaches, consultants, home visitors, etc.).
Describe:

☐

Education and training staff (such as trainers, CCR&R staff, faculty).
Describe:

☐ ❍ther
.

Describe:

☐ None

b-2) Does the workforce data system apply to:

☐ all practitioners working in programs that are licensed or regulated by the State/Territory to serve children birth to 13?
☐ all practitioners working in programs that receive public funds to serve children birth to age 13?
☑ No.

c) Performance measurement. What, if any, performance measures does the State/Territory use related to its workforce and professional development systems?

The Lead Agency is currently participating in the work of the State Early Childhood Advisory Council. This Council has taken on workforce development as one of its priorities.

d) Evaluation. What, if any, are the State/Territory's plans for evaluation related to its workforce and professional development systems? Evaluation can include efforts related to monitoring implementation of an initiative, validation of standards or assessment tools, or looking at outcomes in programs or the system and may be ongoing or conducted periodically.

The Lead Agency is dedicated to the continued development of a comprehensive, functional professional development system in Mississippi.

3.4.7 Goals for the next Biennium -

In this section, Lead Agencies are asked to identify at least one goal for the upcoming biennium. Lead Agencies are encouraged to include measurable and achievable goals. Lead Agencies may include existing goals (e.g., already identified in a State strategic plan or established by the Governor for a Lead Agency). ACF will target technical assistance efforts to help Lead Agencies achieve their goal(s). Lead Agencies are not required to establish a goal for each sub-section in 3.4. What are the State/Territory's goals for the building the professional development system and improving conditions for the workforce in the coming biennium? What progress does the State/Territory expect to make across the five key elements for the workforce and professional development system described above?

The Lead Agency will continue to work through the Mississippi Early Childhood Advisory Council related to building and improving the professional development system in Mississippi.