



Stage 1 Parent Handbook

Serving our community since 1976

Approved by Child Action, Inc.'s Board of Directors on June 22, 2010

Child Action, Inc.
STAGE 1 PARENT HANDBOOK
General Program Rules

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Child Action, Inc. If you meet eligibility and need requirements, you will qualify for a child care subsidy that will cover part or all of your child care costs. In order for your provider to be reimbursed for services, you need to be aware of and follow both Child Action, Inc.'s policies and those of the governmental agencies which provide the child care funding. The purpose of this handbook is to explain those policies to you so that your provider can be reimbursed in a timely fashion for the care you are eligible to use.

WHAT IS CHILD ACTION, INC.

Child Action, Inc. is a non-profit agency primarily funded by both the State Department of Education, Child Development Division, and the County of Sacramento, to provide services and subsidies to income-eligible families for child care and development services. Child Action, Inc. adheres to all State Department of Education regulations governing Client Services and all County of Sacramento regulations regarding the provision of Stage 1 services, and operates in accordance with all State of California laws governing non-profit agencies. Child Action, Inc. has two distinct departments – Client Services and Resource and Referral – both governed by the Child Action, Inc. Board of Directors. Child Action, Inc. operates on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal access to services without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, marital status, sexual preference, gender identity, veteran's status or any other bias prohibited by law.

Child Action, Inc. offers child care subsidies and services through the programs we administer in our Client Services Program. We receive funding from the federal, state and local governments, and each of our funding sources has its own rules and regulations regarding eligibility and approvable need for child care. Therefore, it is possible that two families receiving services from Child Action, Inc. and using the same child care provider may have different rules applied to their cases.

All of our programs provide parents with a child care certificate (also referred to as "child care schedule" or "CCS") and allow them to select their own providers. Eligible families may obtain certificates/subsidies for their child until their income exceeds 75% of the State median income or until their child reaches the age of thirteen (unless the child has exceptional needs that allow for an extension of services).

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROVIDER

You have hired a child care provider and entrusted that provider with the care and well-being of your children. The better you communicate with the provider, the better care your provider will be able to care for your children. We strongly recommend that you visit your child care provider's site and discuss with the provider all relevant issues related to your child's care, including:

1. Days and times when the provider is available to provide care.
2. Provider charges for basic child care for the days/hours you need.
3. Additional services the provider may provide (such as meals, snacks, transportation) for which you will have to pay.
4. Any additional costs the provider might expect you to pay.
5. How you want discipline handled and whether the provider agrees.
6. Specific needs of the child:
 - a. Is the child on any medication? If yes, what kind and what time during the day does s/he receive the medication?
 - b. Does the child have any food allergies?
 - c. Does the child have any specific health or cognitive needs?
7. Emergency information:
 - a. Who should be contacted in the case of an emergency? If you cannot be reached, who should be notified?
 - b. Where should the child be taken in case of an emergency?
 - c. What type of medical insurance does your family have?
 - d. Who is authorized to pick up the child from care?

TYPES OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

All Child Action, Inc. programs allow care in licensed centers, licensed family child care homes and license exempt centers. Most also allow for exempt, relative and in-home care. Not all programs allow for sectarian care because of State laws governing subsidized child care programs. When choosing the child care that best suits the needs of your children, please consider these options:

Licensed Care:

Child Care Center: A licensed facility which provides child care services for a number of children. Each center's license indicates the number and age groups of children the center may serve. Centers are licensed to serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-aged children or some combination of these age groups.

Family Child Care Home: A private home which has been licensed for the occupant to provide child care services. There are two types of homes, those licensed for six or eight children and those licensed for twelve or fourteen children. In both cases, the license states the number and ages of children who may be served.

Sectarian: Any licensed care which includes religious training or worship. (Not permitted on State-funded programs.)

License-Exempt Care:

License Exempt Center: A child care center that is exempt from licensure because the center is located on school property (private or public), the center is administered by the school, and the majority of children attending the center also attend the school.

Exempt Home: A private home in which the occupant may provide child care services for children from one unrelated family that does not reside with the occupant.

Relative: Child care provided by the child's grandparent, aunt, or uncle in her/his own home, and the child for which care is provided does not reside with grandparent, aunt or uncle.

In-Home: Care given by a non-licensed provider in the child's home (including when the provider and the child being cared for live in the same home). In-home care requires an employer/employee relationship between the parent and the provider. The parent is considered the provider's employer and is legally responsible to pay all required taxes, to carry insurance on the provider (including Worker's Compensation), to pay required minimum wage and to abide by any other regulations regarding employment. The parent should contact an accountant, attorney or Federal and State Tax Agency to obtain the appropriate rules and regulations. The in-home provider is employed solely at the will of the parent and may be terminated at the discretion of the parent.

GENERAL POLICIES (REQUIRED BY STATE REGULATIONS)

When you agree to receive a child care subsidy, you agree to accept the regulations and policies set by state law, funding sources and Child Action, Inc. The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of those regulations and policies.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF SERVICE

The use or disclosure of any information maintained in the basic data file concerning parents or their families is limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of Child Action, Inc.'s program. No other use of this information shall be made without the parent's prior written consent unless it is subpoenaed by a court of law. Parents have access to the information in their family's file.

PARENT CHOICE POLICY

Child Action, Inc. is a parent choice program which means it is the parent's responsibility to select a provider for her/his children. The facility chosen by the parent must be licensed and/or operating in accordance with applicable State of California laws or codes. Child Action, Inc. never places children in the care of providers.

Parents may change their care settings to meet their needs but they are required to provide Child Action, Inc. with a ten (10) working day notice, and parents must give their providers notice in accordance with their provider's rules.

PARENTS' RIGHTS TO INFORMATION ABOUT PROVIDERS

Oliver's Law (AB 458 Zettel)—requires all child care resource and referral programs and alternative payment programs to advise every person who requests a child care referral of his or her right to view the licensing information of a licensed child day care facility.

Parents who choose a licensed provider have the right and responsibility to view any licensing information regarding site visits to their provider's facility or records related to any substantiated or inconclusive complaints about the child care provider that they select to care for their children. This information is public and licensed providers are required by State law to make these records accessible to parents. In addition, state law requires licensed providers to provide parents with a Notification of Parents' Rights form.

For information about licensed providers, parents may call Day Care Licensing at (916) 875-2808 regarding family child care homes and Community Care Licensing at (916) 229-4530 regarding child care centers. Child Action, Inc. strongly recommends that parents review a potential child care provider's licensing history before placing their child in care.

Parents who choose a child care program exempt from licensure (such as a parent co-op, recreation program, or community-based program) should ask the program staff about their complaint policies.

Parents who choose a non-licensed child care provider have the ongoing responsibility to see that their provider continually meets required basic health and safety standards.

Megan's Law (AB 488 Parra) provides the public with internet access to detailed information on registered sex offenders. Parents can visit the Department of Justice "Registered Sex Offender" database at www.meganslaw.ca.gov.

TRUSTLINE

State law requires all non-licensed child care providers (other than the child's aunt, uncle or grandparent) to be TrustLine registered before they can be reimbursed for services. Providers applying for TrustLine **cannot be reimbursed until their TrustLine application is processed and Child Action, Inc. receives confirmation that they are TrustLine registered.** The TrustLine process, which consists of a background check conducted by the California Department of Social Services, can take as little as a few days or as long as a year or more, depending on circumstances. TrustLine registration is granted once a provider clears the background check.

This means that if your provider is not licensed or the child's aunt, uncle or grandparent, s/he will need to complete a TrustLine application form, be live-scanned (electronic fingerprinting), complete a Criminal History form, and wait for the background check to be completed before s/he can be reimbursed for any services. If your provider is the aunt, uncle or grandparent, s/he will be asked to provide documentation of her/his relationship to the child.

STAGE 1 PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY (for cash aid recipients)

If you are on cash aid, your worker from Sacramento County's Department of Human Assistance determines your eligibility and need for child care. To be eligible to enroll on the Stage 1 Program, you must have a referral (SC78A) from your worker. The days and hours of care for which you are eligible are indicated on this form. If you need additional care, Child Action, Inc. cannot approve the change without the county worker's approval.

When you are referred to Child Action, Inc., you must speak to someone in our Assessment Unit (916-361-0511) to begin the enrollment process. **We will not enroll any parent on Stage 1 until the parent contacts us directly and attends an enrollment appointment at a designated Child Action, Inc. office.**

VERIFICATION OF FAMILY COMPOSITION

Before you can be enrolled, you must supply the following information:

1. Your full name, address and telephone number (home or message), as well as the name of the second parent in the household (two-parent families).
2. Names, gender and birth dates of all children under the age of eighteen (18) in the family, whether or not they will be served by the program.
3. Supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family, which may include:
 - a. Birth certificates or school/medical records
 - b. County welfare records
 - c. Court orders regarding custody or child support
 - d. Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

OTHER INFORMATION NEEDED TO COMPLETE ENROLLMENT

1. Needs Assessment and Referral form
2. Pre-admission Health History—Parent's Report
3. Pre-admission Health History—Physician's Report and immunization records (only required for non school-aged children)

NOTE: Parents must complete the entire enrollment process before services will be approved.

RECERTIFICATION

You must be recertified at least once during a twelve-month period or at pre-arranged dates, depending on your family's eligibility status.

NOTE: It is the parent's responsibility to notify Child Action, Inc. within five (5) days of any changes in family size, family income, need for child care services, addresses, phone numbers and any other information regarding family eligibility and need. Failure to notify Child Action, Inc. of any changes may result in termination from the program.

PARENT SERVICE INACTIVITY

Parents receiving Stage 1 or Stage 2 funds may experience temporary periods of ineligibility as they complete their CalWORKs activities. When this occurs, instead of issuing the parent a leave of absence, Child Action, Inc. will inactivate the parent's file.

PARENT—TERMINATION/DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE

Parents who choose to terminate services with Child Action, Inc. should notify us two weeks in advance and should notify their child care provider in accordance with the provider's policies regarding termination of services.

Parents may be terminated from Child Action, Inc.'s program for any of the following reasons:

1. Eligibility is discontinued by DHA or eligibility period ends and the parent has no new referral from DHA.
2. Failure to adhere to any rules established by Child Action, Inc.
3. Failure to submit verifiable information regarding eligibility or need for services, or any other required documentation, by the assigned due date.
4. Failure to report any changes that affect eligibility or need for services within five (5) days.
5. Failure to establish a continued need for services.
6. Use of child care services that have not been approved, or use of child care services for which a need cannot be substantiated.
7. No approved provider.
8. Failure to accurately maintain attendance forms on a daily basis.
9. Falsification of information on attendance forms, or refusal to sign attendance forms.
10. Failure to be recertified or failure to keep scheduled appointments.
11. Submission of fraudulent, false or misleading information or documentation.
12. Use of abusive or vulgar language, attempts to bribe, coerce, extort or threaten any Child Action, Inc. employee or client.
13. Failure to pay parent fees by the due date.
14. Family's gross monthly income exceeds 75% of the State median income.
15. Child reaches her/his 13th birthday.

We hope your time with Child Action, Inc. is productive and allows you peace of mind that your children are in good care. We also hope that your time on this program will help enable you to reach your goals.

Child Action, Inc. Locations

9800 Old Winery Place
Sacramento, CA 95827-1700
(916) 369-0191

2330 Glendale Lane, Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95825-2455
(916) 921-5345

1174 National Drive, Suite 40
Sacramento, CA 95834-2955
(916) 928-3018



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at www.childaction.org!**