

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Consent Item

September 14, 2018

SUBJECT: Amendment to Rule 6M-9.300, Child Care Resource and Referral and Consumer Education

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1001.213(2), Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Early Learning administers federal and state child care funds and partners with 30 local early learning coalitions to deliver comprehensive early learning services statewide. The office oversees three programs—the School Readiness Program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program, and Child Care Resource and Referral services. OEL is required to submit its proposed rules to the State Board of Education for approval.

The Rule provides clarity on the duties and responsibilities of both the state Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) network office and local CCR&R organizations and makes changes to program requirements to align with technological advances made. The Rule also establishes and clarifies minimum training requirements for local CCR&R Coordinators and staff; increases the accessibility and availability of CCR&R services for parents, families and providers; and focuses services toward the needs of the family and child(ren) in effort to promote informed quality child care choices.

Supporting Documentation Included: Proposed Rule 6M-9.300, F.A.C., and 2017 Child Care Resource and Referral Fact Sheet for Families

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6M-9.300 Child Care Resource and Referral and Consumer Education.

(1) The Office of Early Learning, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) state network, shall ensure delivery of CCR&R services as defined in the Child Care Development Block Grant of 2014, Title 45 Part 98 Code of Federal Regulations, and Section 1002.92, Florida Statutes (F.S.).

(2) Definitions.

(a) “Business hours” refers to the hours during which a CCR&R organization has staff available to provide services to customers via telephone, through email or in person.

(b) “Child care listing” refers to the customized list of child care providers that best meet a family’s needs generated from the single statewide information system.

(c)~~(a)~~ “CCR&R organization” refers to any early learning coalition or other contracted entity providing CCR&R services to customers pursuant to Section 1002.92, F.S.

(d) “Community resources” refers to financial assistance programs that a family may be eligible for, including School Readiness, Voluntary Prekindergarten, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC), Head Start and Early Head Start, as well as any organization or service that a family may qualify for that will support the family’s financial independence, assist with developmental concerns and help fill an unmet need.

(e) “Community outreach” refers to activities in the CCR&R service area that increase awareness of CCR&R services, this can include involvement in community events, establishing community partnerships, displaying program materials in public spaces, and marketing activities.

(f) “Consumer education” refers to information and resources that assist an individual or family in making informed decisions regarding quality child care.

(g) “Differential fee” refers to a child care fee charged by a provider to a parent who participates in the School Readiness Program or any other subsidized child care assistance program that is in addition to the parent copayment set by the early learning coalition.

(h) “Family engagement” refers to the systematic inclusion of families as partners in their child’s development, learning and wellness, enabled by positive relationships between families and staff in coalitions and early learning programs.

(i) “Legally operating provider” refers to any child care, early learning or school-age provider that is either licensed, registered, or has a qualifying exemption from licensure from the Florida Department of Children and Families, including before-school and after-school programs, summer recreation and summer day camp programs, and recreational facilities.

(j) “Quality child care” refers to child care programs that maintain a degree of excellence, going above and beyond minimum standards for health and safety and training, and maintain a high level of positive teacher-child interactions, promoting the health and well-being of all children physically, socially, emotionally and developmentally.

(k) “Registration fee” refers to a fee charged by a provider to a parent for enrollment of a child into a child care program.

(l)(b) “Service area” refers to the county or multicounty region served by the CCR&R organization.

(m) “Standard business hours” refers to operating hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

(n) “Single statewide information system” refers to the statewide early learning data system used to capture and provide critical information to early learning coalitions, parents, partners and providers.

~~(c) “Business hours” refers to the hours during which a CCR&R organization has staff available to provide services to customers via telephone, through email, or in person.~~

(3) Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Services.

CCR&R services shall be locally administered, coordinated, and overseen by early learning coalitions in accordance with Section 1002.92, F.S. Early learning coalitions or their contracted CCR&R organizations shall:

(a) Offer CCR&R services including ~~child care/early learning~~ listings, consumer education, and information regarding community resources, as identified in paragraph (7) below, to each family applying for or individual requesting CCR&R, School Readiness or Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program services, without regard to age, level of income or individual circumstances.

~~(b) Provide access to information and resources that enable parents to make informed choices on quality child care, including information and resources on the full range of provider types available; child care licensing; health, safety, and inspection requirements for each type of provider; child care personnel background checks and disqualifying offenses; research and best practices regarding child development; indicators of quality child care; meaningful parent and family engagement; state policies, if applicable, regarding the social-emotional-behavioral health of children; and developmental screenings.~~

~~(c)~~ Offer CCR&R services to all individuals requesting services without regard to age, an individual's level of income, or individual circumstances.

~~(b)(d)~~ Provide CCR&R services without cost to the family applying for or individual requesting services within two (2) ~~three (3)~~ business days of the request.

~~(c)(e)~~ Attempt to contact and respond to families individuals requesting services in an emergency situation within four (4) business hours of becoming aware of the request. Emergency situations may include:

1. Closure of a child care or early learning provider with less than forty-eight (48) hours of notice;
2. Declaration of a state of emergency by local, state, or federal officials that affects families and providers within the CCR&R organization's service area; and,
3. Family emergencies including the death or hospitalization of a parent or guardian, a change in custody of a child with less than forty-eight (48) hours of notice, or a change in employment or employment status with less than forty-eight (48) hours of notice.

~~(d)(f)~~ Notwithstanding paragraphs ~~(3)(b)(1)(d)~~ and ~~(c)(e)~~ of this rule, the CCR&R organization is not required to provide services in emergency situations if the CCR&R organization is unable to operate as a result of a state of emergency as declared by local, state, or federal officials.

(4) Accessibility of Information and Services.

(a) Each CCR&R organization shall provide the Office of Early Learning with an annual accessibility report no later than the last business day in August, identifying how CCR&R services are made accessible to families individuals within its service area, including families individuals who have limited access to telephone services, internet services, or transportation. The report shall also outline the CCR&R organization's plan for family engagement and community outreach. The CCR&R organization ~~may utilize technology and~~ shall coordinate with other community entities in order to expand the accessibility of services.

(b) Each CCR&R organization shall maintain a website and at least one other form of outreach and awareness within its service area that describes the services offered. The home front page of the website for of the early learning coalition and the contracted CCR&R organization, if applicable, shall clearly display administrative and CCR&R and family services contact information, as well as provider services contact information, including phone numbers, and hours of operation and a brief description of services available for families and providers.

(5) Location and Hours of Service.

(a) At least one physical location for CCR&R services shall be available in each CCR&R organization's service area.

(b) Each CCR&R organization shall have staff members available to provide CCR&R services via telephone, email and in person for a minimum of forty (40) hours each week during the organization's set business hours.

(c) If the CCR&R organization is closed at any time during standard business hours, the CCR&R organization shall provide a message on their family services line with its hours of operation and contact information for an alternative organization that can assist families during emergency situations, such as those outlined in paragraph (3)(d) above.

(d)(e) CCR&R organizations shall be permitted to reduce the number of weekly hours of in-person and telephone availability by a maximum of eight (8) hours for each local, state, or federal holiday and each business day during which a local, state, or federal emergency is declared that makes the CCR&R organization unable to operate.

(6) Customized Child Care/~~Early Learning~~ Listings.

(a) CCR&R services, including listings, may be offered in person, via telephone or using other electronic means.

(b) Child care/~~early learning~~ listings shall be generated using the single statewide information system maintained by the Office of Early Learning.

(c) CCR&R organizations shall provide or send each family individual requesting services a list of legally operating child care providers in their service area within two (2) three (3)-business days and in the format requested by the family individual. Each list shall be customized according to information provided by the family individual requesting services, or at a minimum, by entering the following information:

1. Location;
2. Days/time care is needed;
3. Child's date of birth;
4. Type of early learning program or provider, if requested;
5. Child's special need, if applicable; ~~and~~
6. Family's primary language, if not English;
7. Reason for care; and
8. Other services offered by providers, as requested by the family.

(d) ~~Child care/early learning~~ listings shall include a minimum of ~~six (6) ten (10)~~ providers matching the criteria identified by the ~~family individual~~ requesting services unless fewer than ~~six (6) ten (10)~~ providers match the criteria. Listings shall also include contact information for the CCR&R organization if additional listings or resources are needed by the family.

(e) The following consumer education information shall be included with each customized provider listing:

1. How to access each provider's licensing status, required health and safety standards, recent inspection reports and history of violations, as applicable.
2. How to access information regarding voluntary quality standards met by the provider, such as accreditation, Gold Seal, program assessment, child assessment, or participation in local quality initiatives.
3. Information on how to submit a complaint through the child care licensing agency.
4. Contact information for the state and local child care provider licensing agencies.

~~(f)~~(e) Additional cConsumer education and community resources, as ~~identified outlined~~ in subsection (7), shall be included with each customized listing, unless declined by the ~~family individual~~.

~~(f) Contact information for the state and local child care provider licensing agencies shall be included with provider listings sent to the individual.~~

(7) Consumer Education and Community Resources.

(a) CCR&R organizations shall offer information regarding and access to consumer education and community resources to all ~~families applying for or individuals~~ requesting CCR&R services, unless declined by the family.

(b) Consumer education shall include:

1. Information and resources that enable parents to recognize quality indicators and to make informed choices on quality child care;
2. Information on the full range of child care provider types available, whether licensed or license-exempt, such as family child care homes, centers, before or after school programs, public or nonpublic schools, faith-based, and recreational facilities;
3. Child care licensing and inspection requirements for each type of provider;
4. Health and safety requirements, including background screening and disqualifying offenses;
5. Research and best practices regarding children's social-emotional, physical and cognitive development, developmentally appropriate practices and meaningful parent and family engagement;

6. State policies regarding the social emotional behavioral health of children; and

7. Information on where parents can receive a developmental screening for their child(ren).

~~(c)(b)~~ Each CCR&R organization shall maintain a current directory or access to community resources, which shall include:

1. Community services for each county within the CCR&R organization's service area;
2. Federal and state financial ~~Financial~~-assistance programs;
3. Federal, state and local partners, including state agencies and social services organizations;
4. Child healthcare;
5. Child welfare and abuse;
6. Services for children with special needs or developmental disabilities, such as developmental screenings or assessments;
7. Resources provided by the Office of Early Learning or identified through collaboration with other entities; and
8. Other resources as needed and appropriate to the specific needs of the individual family.

(8) Provider Updates.

(a) ~~Each~~ Each ~~Prior to the CCR&R organization's last business day in May, each~~ CCR&R organization shall ensure that provider information for each legally operating child care, early learning or school-age provider, and each provider receiving state or federal funds within the CCR&R organization's service area, is updated and approved annually between January 1 and May 31 of each calendar year in the single statewide information system maintained by the Office of Early Learning ~~for each legally operating child care/early learning provider licensed or registered by the Department of Children and Families and each provider receiving state or federal funds within the CCR&R organization's service area.~~

(b) Provider information for providers with an active contract to provide School Readiness services or the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education program must be updated prior to contract renewal.

~~(c)(b)~~ At a minimum, the CCR&R organization shall ensure that update ~~update~~ the following information is updated for each provider:

1. Contact information;
2. Gold Seal or accreditation status;
3. Quality reating, if available;

4. Program schedule;
5. Ages served;
6. Group sizes and ratios;
7. Enrollment information;
8. Private pay rates charged;
9. Registration fees charged, if applicable;
10. Differential fees charged, if applicable;
- ~~11.9.~~ Environment;
- ~~12.10.~~ Special services offered;
- ~~13.11.~~ Languages other than English spoken fluently by the provider's staff;
- ~~14.12.~~ Transportation; and,
- ~~15.13.~~ Meal options.

~~(d)(e)~~ Notwithstanding paragraphs (8)(a) and (8)(b) above, the CCR&R organization shall ensure ~~updated~~ provider information updated outside of the provider update time period is approved within fifteen (15) calendar days of being submitted by the provider ~~entered into the statewide information system within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of information from a provider.~~

~~(e)(d)~~ Legally operating providers ~~not defined in paragraph (8)(a)~~ shall be included in the provider update process upon request by the provider.

~~(e)~~ ~~CCR&R organizations may include information in the statewide information system for other legally operating early learning and school age child care providers, such as license exempt providers, before school and after school programs, summer recreation and summer day camp programs and recreational facilities and nanny and au pair agencies.~~

(9) Technical Assistance.

(a) The CCR&R organization shall provide technical assistance to existing and potential providers, as requested.

Technical assistance may include information and resources regarding:

1. Early learning program types and available services;
2. Health and safety requirements;
3. Available training and professional development opportunities;

4. Effective business practices to help providers maximize their ability to serve children and families; and

5. Initiating new child care services, including how to access information regarding zoning and local child care ordinances, program and budget development, becoming a licensed provider, and other resources as needed and appropriate to assist the provider.

~~(10)~~(9) Staff Training Requirements.

(a) The CCR&R organization shall ensure all CCR&R staff, including staff in blended positions who provide CCR&R services, are trained in customer service, consumer education, community resources, financial assistance programs for families, and available types of child care and early learning providers and programs, specific to their service area, and have successfully completed the CCR&R specialist evaluation within four (4) months of employment as a CCR&R specialist.

(b) Each CCR&R organization must have a designated CCR&R coordinator. The designated CCR&R coordinator must successfully complete the CCR&R specialist and coordinator evaluations within four (4) months of employment as the CCR&R designated coordinator.

~~(11)~~(10) Early learning coalitions and CCR&R organizations are prohibited from charging a provider or other organization a fee for identifying the provider or other organization through the single statewide information system.

Rulemaking Authority 1002.92 FS. Law Implemented 1002.92 FS. History—New 8-10-09, Formerly 60BB-9.300, Amended 9-1-15, _____.

Florida's Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Fact Sheet for Families



Are you a parent with questions about child care in Florida? If so, the statewide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) network can help. The services are free for any family living in or moving to Florida.

Child care is an important part of helping parents manage their responsibilities. In Florida, the Office of Early Learning works at the state level and partners with 30 regional early learning coalitions to help families connect with resources. Each coalition has a local CCR&R team that provides services to families, child care providers, employers and their communities.

What does the local CCR&R program do for families?

- Shares detailed information about valuable community and state resources.
- Keeps a database of all legally operating child care providers to help families select an early learning program that best meets their needs.
- Talks with families about a child's basic needs, financial assistance, community resources and other agencies that support families' well-being.
- Connects families to specialists and resources for supporting children with special needs.
- Helps families with the school readiness or voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) application process.
- Shares resources that support the needs of military families.
- Offers assistance to foster families and homeless families.



Florida's Child Care Resource and Referral Services can help your family by providing



A customized list of local child care options from trained child care resource and referral specialists.



Information about quality child care and early learning programs.



Financial assistance strategies and opportunities.



Referrals to other community resources and programs.

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Florida's Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Fact Sheet for Families

How does the local CCR&R program help child care providers?

- Connects families to child care providers that meet their individual needs.
- Offers new child care providers free start-up information and technical assistance.
- Provides access to resources to promote quality early childhood education.
- Offers free professional development and technical assistance opportunities for child care providers and their staff.
- Distributes information about best practices in operating a child care program, engaging families, child development, consumer information, local and statewide initiatives, and resources for teachers, children and families.

How do I receive CCR&R assistance?

To find out more, contact your early learning coalition. Visit www.floridaearlylearning.com for a map of the 30 coalitions. You may also call the state office on their toll-free family line at 866-357-3239.



What services does the state CCR&R office provide?

- Provides oversight, guidance, training and technical assistance to coalitions and their CCR&R staff.
- Operates a toll-free call center for families and providers.
- Maintains information and access to all early learning programs in Florida.
- Develops educational materials and other resources for coalitions, families and child care providers.
- Collaborates with different agencies, community partners and national experts to improve the state's child care services as well as access to child care.
- Provides objective information for planning and policy development to the public and private sectors.
- Works with federal, state and local entities to provide emergency services during and after natural disasters.

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<p>CCR&R helps families locate quality child care programs in their communities.</p>	<p>In the 2016-2017 school year, CCR&R staff served more than 242,698 families.</p>	<p>Coalition CCR&R staff provide information about financial help for child care for eligible families.</p>	<p>Every family in Florida has access to CCR&R services.</p>	<p>Coalition CCR&R staff provide info about resources for children who may have learning or health problems.</p>

