

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

(1) The Division of Early Learning, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) state network, must shall ensure delivery of CCR&R services as defined in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, 45 C.F.R. 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.~~

~~(b)(e)~~ “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.

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

~~(d) “Community outreach” refers to activities in the CCR&R service area that increase awareness of CCR&R services, such as involvement in community events, establishing community partnerships, displaying program materials in public spaces and on social media platforms, and marketing activities.~~

~~(e)(d)~~ “Community resources” refers to social service and financial assistance programs that a family may be eligible for, such as provider discounts and scholarships, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office on Homelessness, home visiting programs, mental health services, the School Readiness Program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the 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 on social media platforms, 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 and cost of care.

(g) No change.

(h) “Family engagement” refers to the systematic inclusion of families as partners in their children’s ~~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 standards and training, and that maintain a high level of positive teacher-child interactions, promoting the health and well-being of all children physically, socially, emotionally, and developmentally.

(k) through (l) No change.

(m) “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.

~~(n)~~ (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.~~

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

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

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

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

(c) through (d) No change.

(4) Accessibility of Information and Services.

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

(b) Each CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ maintain a website and at least one other form of outreach and awareness within its service area. The outreach and awareness must include a statement of CCR&R and services offered through the program. The home page of the website for the ~~early learning coalition and the contracted~~ CCR&R organization, ~~if applicable,~~ ~~must shall~~ clearly display, at a minimum, a brief description of CCR&R family and provider services, the primary family and provider telephone number(s), and hours of operation.

(5) Location and Hours of Service.

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

(b) Each CCR&R organization ~~must 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 business hours.

(c) If the CCR&R organization is closed at any time during standard business hours, the CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ provide a message on ~~its their~~ family services line and home page of its website, 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)(c)(~~d~~), of this rule ~~above~~.

(d) CCR&R organizations ~~are 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 Listings.

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

(b) Child care listings must ~~shall~~ be generated using the single statewide information system maintained by the DEL Division of Early Learning.

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

1. through 8. No change.

(d) Child care listings must ~~shall~~ include a minimum of six (6) providers matching the criteria identified by the family requesting services unless fewer than six (6) providers match the criteria. The CCR&R organization must document when fewer than six (6) providers match the family's criteria. Listings must ~~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 must ~~shall~~ be included with each customized provider listing:

1. through 4. No change.

(f) Additional consumer education and community resources, as identified in subsection (7) of this rule, must ~~shall~~ be included with each customized listing, unless declined by the family.

(7) Consumer Education and Community Resources.

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

(b) Consumer education must ~~shall~~ include:

1. No change.

2. Information on the full range of child care provider types available, whether licensed or license-exempt, such as family child care homes, child care facilities ~~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~~ type;

4. No change.

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 and behavioral health of children; and

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

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

1. through 2. No change.

3. Federal, state, and local partners, including state agencies and social services organizations;

4. through 6. No change.

7. Resources provided by the DEL ~~Division of Early Learning~~ or identified through collaboration with other entities; and

8. No change.

(8) Provider Profile Updates.

(a) Each CCR&R organization must ~~shall~~ ensure that contracted and non-contracted 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 between January 1 and May 31 of each calendar year in the single statewide information system maintained by the DEL ~~Division of Early Learning~~.

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

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

1. Type of Program;

2. ~~4.~~ Contact information;

3. ~~2.~~ Gold Seal designation under Section 1002.945, F.S., and accreditation status, if applicable;

~~4. 3-~~ Quality rating;

~~5. 4-~~ Program schedule;

~~6. 5-~~ Ages served;

~~7. 6-~~ Group sizes and ratios;

~~8. 7-~~ Enrollment information;

~~9. 8-~~ Private pay rates charged;

~~10. 9-~~ Registration, differential, and other fees charged, if applicable;

~~10. Differential fees charged, if applicable;~~

11. through 19. No change.

20. The components of the ~~VPK Voluntary Prekindergarten~~ Education Program performance metric calculated under Section 1002.68, F.S., which must consist of the composite program assessment ~~composite~~ score, learning gains score, achievement score, and the provider's designations, if applicable;

21. The ~~S~~chool ~~R~~eadiness composite program assessment ~~composite~~ score and program assessment care level composite score results delineated by infant, toddler ~~classrooms~~, and preschool classrooms results under Section 1002.82, F.S., if applicable;

22. No change.

23. Participation in ~~S~~chool ~~R~~eadiness child assessment under Section 1002.82, F.S.; and

24. The average annual costs associated with curriculum, materials, food, maintenance, and any regulatory fees or operational costs per child under Section 1002.895(6)(b), F.S., if applicable.

(d) Regardless of being contracted or non-contracted, child care facilities licensed under Section 402.305, F.S., and licensed and registered family day care homes must, at a minimum, provide the following information annually: type of program, hours of service, ages of children served, fees and eligibility for services and data required under Section 1002.895, F.S., pursuant to Section 1002.92(4), F.S.

~~(e)(d)~~ Notwithstanding paragraphs (8)(a) and ~~(8)(b)~~ of this rule, above, the CCR&R organization must shall ensure that provider information updated outside of the annual provider update ~~time~~ period is approved within fifteen (15) calendar days of being submitted by the provider into the single statewide information system.

~~(f)(e)~~ Legally operating providers must shall be included in the provider update process upon request by the provider. ~~The early learning coalition must review and approve the provider profile submitted within the single~~

~~statewide information system.~~

(9) The CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ document each request for CCR&R services described in subsection (6) ~~of this rule above~~ in the single statewide information system. Monthly, the CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ review the ~~DEL Division of Early Learning~~ specified data report(s) to monitor CCR&R customer intake data in the single statewide information system. If DEL determines through its quarterly review that the organization's data is not representative of CCR&R services offered, the CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ review procedures to determine if revisions are needed to increase the number of CCR&R customer intakes in the single statewide information system.

~~(10) 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)(11) Staff Training Requirements.~~

(a) The CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ ensure all CCR&R staff, including staff in blended positions who provide CCR&R services, are trained by a CCR&R Coordinator or designated trainer, 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 ~~S~~pecialist ~~E~~valuation within four (4) months of employment as a CCR&R ~~S~~pecialist. Designated trainers for the CCR&R program, if not the Coordinator, must comply with the Coordinator training requirements.

(b) Each CCR&R organization must have a designated CCR&R ~~C~~oordinator. The designated CCR&R ~~C~~oordinator must successfully complete the CCR&R ~~S~~pecialist ~~E~~valuation and ~~CCR&R C~~oordinator ~~E~~valuation within four (4) months of employment as the ~~designated~~ CCR&R ~~designated~~ ~~C~~oordinator.

(c) Each CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ accurately complete and submit the staff list to the DEL-designated location by the established deadline. Staff lists ~~may shall~~ not be changed or removed from ~~the its~~ designated location once submitted. The CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ provide email notification and an updated staff list to the CCR&R state network office within five (5) business days of a change in the designated CCR&R Coordinator position.

(d) Each CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ complete assessments on fifty (50) percent of its CCR&R staff by December 31 and complete assessments on the remaining fifty (50) percent of CCR&R staff by June 30. The organization ~~must shall~~ deliver training to CCR&R staff based on assessment results for quality assurance ~~and~~. ~~The organization shall~~ retain records of completed assessments, ~~and~~ trainings, and staff assessment data for each CCR&R staff member on its the staff list.

~~(11)(12)~~ Each CCR&R organization ~~must shall~~ establish written procedures for training CCR&R staff on serving families and providers, including offering technical assistance to providers, monitoring CCR&R program data, completing provider profile updates, and completing CCR&R customer intakes in the single statewide information system, ~~and technical assistance provided in accordance with subsection (10) of this rule.~~

~~(12)(13) 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 1001.02(1),(2)(n), 1002.92 FS. Law Implemented 1002.92 FS. History—New 8-10-09, Formerly 60BB-9.300, Amended 9-1-15, 10-21-18, 11-23-21.