

CHILD DEVELOPMENT QUESTION AND ANSWER OCTOBER 9 AND 10 WEBCAST

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: When are agencies required to apply the new eligibility and need regulations when enrolling families. Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. Agencies do not have to complete implementation of these regulations until the end of June 2009. However, the agencies do have to be able to demonstrate that they understand the new standards and are in the process of training staff and implementing the new regulations. So, as of October 1st, 2008, agencies need to begin to use the new regulations in determining eligibility and need for new families, and whenever they touch a file for update. So what we're looking for inside of the review process is to see that the agencies have begun the implementation of the new rates whenever they work with the family file as well as the completion of the full implementation of the regulation by the end of June 2009.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK:: How will the 801a be used in the review process and what is the goal of reviewing this report? And that sounds like Margo, please.

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. The federal government requires that all states report on the number of families who received approved services each month. Accurate reporting of parents who received approved services each month is necessary to comply with this federal requirement. So this year, the consultants will be checking the cases reported on the federal 801a report for accuracy against the actual families on the agencies rosters at the time of the review process. Agencies that have inaccurately recorded families participating in the services will be required to correct their 801as as well as to revise that process for the 801a reporting process.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: How do we select the regional market rate ceiling for the care needed? And that sounds like Margo.

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. For the alternative payment programs, the parents' need for services has to be translated into the maximum benefit amount or what we call the reimbursement ceiling in relationship to the regional market rate. So, it is this maximum benefit amount that is available to the parent to purchase the childcare that they need. And when we look to section 18074.2 of title v, it provides direction that they're seemingly selected based upon the age of the child receiving the service, the type of childcare facility that the parents selects to place their child into childcare, and the parents' authorized certified need for childcare time. Beyond this, there are no other considerations for the agency when they are determining which regional market rate reimbursements they need to utilize. And for the alternative payment contracts, one of the most common errors we find in the program is evidence that the parents need for care and the actual days and hours of care and the selection of the reimbursements and then become disconnected one from the other and this would become a point of error for the agency.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: What types of absences are reimbursed for attendance reporting? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. Reimbursed attendance in child development programs includes excused absences, and excused absences include days when a child is absent due to their illness or their parent's illness, a child or their family is quarantined; the child's absence are based on court-ordered visitation or they are considered best interest days and there are ten best interest days for each child inside of each physical cycle. And also, excused absences are applicable when there is a family emergency, and the agency with action write its own policy regarding family emergencies. All other absences are considered unexcused. For center-based programs, unexcused absences can be claimed for reimbursement up to a total of 5% of the total days of the enrollment at the center. For alternative payment programs, local agencies are able to set their own standards regarding whether or no unexcused absences may be reimbursed. And if so, the number eligible for reimbursement either consecutively or cumulatively within the fiscal year.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: How do we determine the income of the parent who receives either ssi or ssp benefits?

MARGO HUNKINS: The supplemental security income or ssi is a federal income supplement program to help aged individuals; blind or disabled people who have little or no income. The state of California also provides additional benefits through its program, the states supplemental program or ssp. For the recipient of either ssi or ssp, any income of this person is not counted for the purposes of establishing eligibility for a child development placement. We would not count spouses support, annuities, insurance settlement wages, workman's comp, survivor or retirement benefits. But as a reminder, there is ssi for children. And so, the recipient's income across all categories would not be counted, but their children's income would be.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: How do we count medical and dental insurance as listed in the gross pay on a check statement? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. This is new; this is a new addition to the title v regulation. So, if the medical or dental insurance is listed on the pay statement and is included in the gross amount on the pay statement, but the applicant does not have access to those funds, nor would they be able to have elected the option that the insurance is paid by the employer or not, it's mandatory participation. Then we would not include this medical or dental benefit inside of the applicant parents' income calculation. What we're looking at is the primary point to determine whether or whether not the insurance is mandatory, and whether or whether not the applicant parent would actually receive a cash benefit at the end of the year from funds that would be unused if that were to occur.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: When we are enrolling a parent, how do we determine the composition of the family?

MARGO HUNKINS: This is also a new section in the title v regulation, and I would guide you to the section of the regulation 18100. It's multifaceted and multistage. So, the parent means biological parents, that parent, adopted parent or foster parent, anyone that has the responsibility and care and welfare of that child. So, the applicant can designate themselves, obviously, as a parent having responsibility

for the care and welfare of the child. They may also designate somebody else in the household. Once the parent has provided documentation of the children that are being counted in their household, they would also be needing to supply additional documentation if those pieces of documentations; say birth record, documentations included another parent, the parent applicant would be required to provide documentation that the other parent is absent from the household. And again, I encourage you to take a look at the section of the regulation 18100 inclusive as well as to take the regulatory handbook which has been supplied throughout the state, and it's very informative in the application of the section.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: Margo, it sounds like this is a complex question. Is there a number that someone can call to get information from you?

MARGO HUNKINS: Yes, there is.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: Please?

MARGO HUNKINS: I would give them the general number for our reception desk which is 916-322-62-33 and they will be asked what county their program is located in, and then they would be directed to their assigned consultant for that county for technical assistant on this question.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: Margo, what are the documentation requirements for homeless families?

MARGO HUNKINS: This is part of the regulation that has remained the same, the documentation for our homeless families would take two potential forms. One would be from the homeless shelter on their letterhead or the church or from a social worker. Another form would take the pathway of being a declaration from the parent applicant themselves as the simple statement of where their current living place is; be at under a bridge or on a couch or in a car, and in relationship to that, the agency would be able to enroll based upon homelessness and again, I would guide you to the regulation as there is now in new piece, there's a limitation on the amount of time allotted for parent to seek shelter, permanent shelter for their homeless situation.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: When the family size only includes the children, what type of income do we count to determine the monthly income amount? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: For children that are placed with a family that does not include their biological or adopted parent, the family size will then be the child and their siblings if any are with them in this placement formally or informally. And the types of income that we would be utilizing for the child would be public cash assistance, the calworks child-only grant, child disability benefits that are not part of the ssi or ssp benefits, child support is received by the guardian, survival benefits, foster care grant payments or the clothing allowance and any other type of financial assistance received for the care of the child living with an adult who is not that child's biological or adopted parents.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: How do we determine travel time for employee needs? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. This section of the regulation is new. There are new guidelines for this particular area. And one of the things that we need to be aware of is that it is dependent upon the authorized block of child care service time, the work time itself. So we would take that block of time and divide it by two. Then, what you would have next to apply is that the travel time may not exceed four hours on any given day of child care service need, and the amount of travel may not exceed the four hours. What we need to remember is that if the parent's child care is right around the block from where they work they're not going to need the full allotment up to four. And so they might only need 15 minutes worth of travel time and this is the amount that would be assigned. So you're encouraged to take a look at the regulations handbook, there are many samples provided there to help you with this particular section, and the section of the code is 18085.5.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: How do we determine sleep time for needs requirement? Are you talking about the adults or the kids? Because I'm just trying to figure this question out, but I'm sure, Margo, you'll help us. How do we determine sleep time for need requirements? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Okay. For the child development contracts, when we speak of need requirements we're speaking of the adult applicant's time requirements based upon their employment. And in relationship to sleep time this is also new inside of the title v regulation and we must remember that sleep time authorization is not automatic. And when we're looking at the parent's work schedule, we're looking at a work schedule that is placed between 10 p.m. To 6 a.m. In the morning, that's the work block that we're looking at. So based upon this we would be able to authorize up to eight hours based upon how that work schedule is configured for the parent. And again, this is more complex, so again, I would guide you to the regulatory handbook to take a look at the samples there to obtain greater clarity on how this is applied.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: For the parent, this is in job development, for the parent that is seeking employment, what types of limits apply? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Yes. This is also new and has provided greater clarity to the section of the reg by providing clear limitation. For the period of eligibility for seeking employment is for 60 consecutive working days, Monday through Friday. And this allows the parent to seek for employment on any day between the start date and the end date inclusive of 60 working days. So what this means for the agency is that they may not have more than five days in a week for seeking employment. The hours allotted may be not more than 30 hours in the week, less than 30 hours in the week. And the parent actually has the ability to say, I would like to have 10 hours on this day and 10 hours on the next day and 10 hours on the next days or, excuse me, 9.5 hours on the next day, and thereby collapse all through the less than 30 up to 30 hours into three days. They have that ability to do that. The other thing that is new is that this is by or each parent, not by the family, so that is slightly new. And the other thing that is new is

that the parent would be required to write out a simple plan, a simple statement of how they would like to go about seeking employment ideas that they might have for training, etcetera, etcetera, along those lines, and that would be placed into the parent's file.

DR. STEVE WINLOCK: When a parent that is in training toward a vocational goal, is there a service limitation? Margo?

MARGO HUNKINS: Thank you. This is also new, this has changed. There is currently, now in—that is in the regulation of some total of a six-year limit. And once the parent states to the agency that I am entering into training for vocational goal be it either academic or a journeyman-type of situation, that starts the clock ticking and the clock does not stop regardless of whether or not the parent is involved in continuity with a vocational training situation, so this is new. If a parent currently has a ba and they request additional training, they request to continue on with their training they are able to obtain 24 more units to pursue acquisition of their vocational goal. And the part that remains the same is that agencies are required to gather the parent's progress inside of their vocational training. That would be needed to post the file. And if a parent does not obtain or demonstrate that they have adequate progress than they have one more opportunity like one more semester or one more quarter to demonstrate that.