

Attachment C

19. Explain the process through which DCF works to ensure that appropriate, non-duplicated, timely payments are made to daycare providers (including the steps providers must take to secure payments from DCF), and how the agency intends to improve this process.

INITIAL UP-FRONT WORK

1. Social Worker and Foster Parent identify a daycare.
2. Social Worker completes Wrap Around Fund (WAF- ie Purchase Order) and submits for internal approval
****Note: WAF is submitted for a 3 month period, renewed quarterly for duration of child's stay at the daycare. This provides continuity for the child and the provider, while giving providers flexibility to change rates once per quarter.***
3. WAF is approved and sent to daycare
4. Child is placed
5. Social Worker and Foster Parent begin Care 4 Kids Application
6. Foster Parent submits Care 4 Kids Application

MONTHLY PROCESS (PRE CARE 4 KIDS APPROVAL)

1. Daycare Provider submits an invoice once per month.
Parameters for submission:
 - Due by 10th of the month following the month of service
 - Submitted to a central mailbox for the DCF Office that requested the service
 - Must be child-specific (cannot combine multiple children on 1 invoice)
 - Must include 7 Identifier Fields (Daycare LINK ID # / Social Worker Name / Social Worker Office / Child Name / Child Case LINK # / Dates of Service / Rate)****Note: All Identifier Fields are listed on the WAF sent by DCF to the Daycare Provider. Fields are required due to federal reimbursement guidelines for maintaining child-specific payment files for all services claimed for federal reimbursement. The State risks its claim if these files with this information is not available to federal auditors.***
2. DCF staff print the invoice, match it to the approved WAF, verify that dates/rates match the WAF, and send to the Social Worker for verification of service provision.
3. Social Worker verifies service provision, signs and returns invoice.
4. DCF processes invoice for payment.
5. Provider receives payment either electronically or via paper check (Provider choice).
6. Concurrently, Daycare Provider submits an Aging Statement (only if invoices are more than 45 days outstanding) once per month.
Parameters for submission:
 - Due by 10th of each month
 - Submitted to a central mailbox for the DCF Office that requested the service
 - Is submitted for all invoices claimed by the Provider as outstanding/aging
7. DCF staff review and reconcile the Aging Statement and provide status of invoices to the Provider. This includes working with the Provider to obtain revised invoices when they have been submitted incorrectly (billed for holidays/weekends / billed at rates in excess of the quoted rate / invoices that have already been paid / etc.)

MONTHLY PROCESS (POST CARE 4 KIDS APPROVAL)

1. Daycare Provider submits an invoice once per month.
Parameters for submission:
 - Due by 10th of the month following the month of service
 - Submitted to a central mailbox for the DCF Office that requested the service
 - Must be child-specific (cannot combine multiple children on 1 invoice)
 - Must include 7 Identifier Fields (Daycare LINK ID # / Social Worker Name / Social Worker Office / Child Name / Child Case LINK # / Dates of Service / Rate)
 - Amount received from Care 4 Kids for the child must be listed and deducted from total cost of the invoice
2. DCF staff print the invoice, match it to the approved WAF and verify that dates/rates match the WAF
3. DCF staff compare the invoice to the Care 4 Kids Report to ensure that the invoice accurately reflects all Care 4 Kids payments and send to the Social Worker for verification of service provision.

ALL OTHER STEPS (3-7 above) REMAIN THE SAME

PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

1. Process delineated above is newly implemented (as of 9/1/20). Differences between old process and current process:
 - Quarterly WAFs (as opposed to monthly WAFs)
 - WAFs pre-approved internally by Fiscal Staff (*to reduce rate/calculation/misc. errors that were causing payments to be delayed*)
 - Invoices submitted to one central location electronically (*to provide consistency and ability to search for historic invoices*)
 - Care 4 Kids report verification (*this was not consistently applied previously, resulting in potential for overpayment by the State*)
 - Payment processing limited to 1 person per DCF Office (*to provide organizational efficiency and develop processing expertise*)
 - Aging Statement review (*to introduce general Account Management to this process and allow DCF to openly communicate with providers regarding outstanding invoices on a standard schedule*)
2. Initial data review shows the following gains (since 9/1/20):

	# Invoices Paid	Paid within 45 Days	Paid within 30 Days	Average Payment Timeframe
SFY 2020	13,000	68%	52%	29
SFY 2021 (as of 12/31)	4,328	73%	60%	31
4 Month Difference		5% Increase in payments made within 45 Days	8% Increase in payments made within 30 Days	

3. Next Steps:
 - Continue to work with OEC to identify opportunities to collaborate (specific to DCF use of the Care 4 Kids payment system)
 - Must ensure that DCF payment can begin before Care 4 Kids application is processed
 - Must ensure that DCF payment can continue once Care 4 Kids payment begins (for difference between Care 4 Kids payment and total daycare cost)
 - Must ensure that federal claiming will not be impacted for DCF or OEC (IV-E or TANF)
 - Collaboratively work with OEC to synthesize Care 4 Kids Report to accurately delineate amounts paid per child, per month, as opposed to authorized not to exceed amounts per child, per month
 - Design a Technical Assistance training to offer to Daycare Providers when onboarding and identified as struggling
 - Identify mechanism for tracking providers who continually struggle with timely and accurate submission of invoices and provide technical assistance to each