

WHITE EARTH RESERVATION

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

POLICIES & PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Revised June 8, 2011

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i. Introduction

The White Earth Child Care Program (WECCP) is designed in part to provide monetary help to low-income families who are in need of child care assistance. It is operated by a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau.

The mission of the White Earth Child Care Program is to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality child care services on or near (within a 25 mile radius of White Earth Reservation boundaries) the White Earth Reservation (which includes all of Becker and Mahnomen Counties and a portion of Clearwater County).

This handbook outlines the rules and regulations of the White Earth Child Care Assistance Program. It will inform parents who received child care assistance on the program's policies, procedures, and established guidelines that must be followed. It will also inform child care providers paid by the White Earth Child Care Program of the policies, procedures and established guidelines that must be followed.

Any comments regarding the Policies & Procedures can be directed to Child Care Program Director at (218) 983-3285, ext. 1407.

*White Earth Reservation
Child Care Assistance Program
Policies & Procedures
Rules and Regulation Handbook*

The White Earth Child Care Program is operated under the auspices of the White Earth Reservation Tribal Council Department of Education. Funding for the program is made possible through the United States Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Child Care Bureau's Child Care Development Fund.

The WECCP provides services to Indian families who reside within the service area, which is on or near the White Earth Reservation (all of Becker and Mahnomen Counties and a portion of Clearwater County). There are three components of the WECCP; **(1)** Family Child Care Licensing, **(2)** Child Care Assistance, and **(3)** Quality Improvement.

This handbook is an attempt to give a written account of the WECCP policies and procedures that are followed by the program staff according to Federal Requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 34 CFR, Parts 98 and 99, Child Care and Development Fund; Final Rule, July 1998 and the White Earth Child Care Advisory Committee.

Any comments regarding this handbook should be directed to the WECCP Director at (218) 983-3285 ext. 1407

"Even a minor event in the life of a child is an event of that child's world, and thus a world event"
OSCAR WILDE

I. Application & Intake Process to Determine Eligibility

To be eligible for child care assistance, parents must: **(1)** reside in our **Service Area**, which is on or within 25 miles of the White Earth Reservation (which includes all of Becker and Mahnommen Counties and a portion of Clearwater Counties), **(2)** be a Tribal member or third generation descendent of a federally recognized tribe, **(3)** meet the income requirements based on the WECCP's Basic Sliding Fee Scale and **(4)** be actively involved in employment, school or training activities or job search activities.

Application and Intake Process

Applications may be requested through the WECCP office by calling (218) 983-3285 ext. 1380, faxing (218) 983-4106, mailing to P.O. Box 418, White Earth, MN 56591 or by stopping at our office. Applications may be printed off our website-www.whiteearthchildcare.com or can also be picked up at the Family Investment program

Parents **MUST** call the Child Care Assistance Specialist for an intake appointment to complete the application process.

Call to set up an appointment at:

(218) 983-3285 ext. 1380

Parents must bring with them to the intake appointment the following:

- Completed **Application** with parent's signature
- Completed **Employment Verification Form** for both parents (if applicable), completed and signed by the employer.
- Last **6 months of Income** (i.e., pay stubs, employer generated income print out sheet) for both parents if applicable. This includes significant others who the applicant has a child with or a married spouse (even though they do not biologically have children together).
- **Tribal Enrollment Verification Form** (if enrolled with another Tribe, must have enrollment card and that Tribe's Enrollment Office contact information) or tribal identification card.
- **School/Training Verification** (i.e., class schedule)
- **Signed County Referral Form** (MFIP)
- **Verification of Residency** (i.e. copy of parent and provider's (if unlicensed) current utility bill)
- Completed **Consent to Release of Information Form** for both parents
- Completed **Criminal Background Check Form** (for unlicensed child care providers – the original carbon form with provider signature)
- Copy of **Licensed Child Care Provider's Contract**
- Completed **Immunization Records** for each child applying for assistance
- Completed **Parent & Provider Statement** with original signatures (parent & provider)
- Copy of Child(ren) Birth Certificates.

All Forms listed above, MUST be brought with parent(s) for the INTAKE APPOINTMENT with the Child Care Assistance Specialist. Forms not completed for intake process could delay the application process to determine eligibility. Applications should be processed for eligibility determination within 14 working days from the initial intake appointment (providing applicant returned all required paperwork).

Incomplete applications are not placed on the waiting list until all required forms are turned in.

IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPLY ALL COMPLETED FORMS.

A. Household income and family size

The application must list all household members and their relationship to the applicant. The WECCP uses an annual Basic Sliding Fee Scale to determine eligibility based on family size and income. If a PO Box number is used, applicant must provide a copy of their current utility bill showing their new "911" address with application.

New children added to application **after** approval will NOT be automatically put on the program. Parents must complete a new application for each child added and the new application will be placed on the waiting list if no new funds are available. Pregnant mothers must notify the child care program as soon as possible and will be required to complete a new application for new child.

Applicants who are married but are separated must provide the WECCP with proof that their spouse is not living in the home by providing us with a copy of spouse's current utility bill at a different residence. If applicant cannot prove spouse is out of the home, verification of employment is needed from both parents for application to be considered.

Applicant is required to provide the following sources of income for last 6 months: •Employment, •Child Support/Alimony, •School grants, •Unemployment, • Social Security, • Child support (whether as income or deduction), • Farmers Income • Self-Employment for all adult household members and will be included as income (this includes significant others or non-biological step-parents). A child or marriage between two adults is bonding and defines that household as a family.

Applicants that receive MFIP, MFIP relative care, foster care, or SSI must verify the income source, however they are only required to pay the minimum co-pay of \$50.

Teenage parents are not required to pay a co-payment if attending school and/or work. Their school/work schedules and attendance will be verified.

B. Verification of Native American Descent

Applicant must complete a verification of Native American Descent Form. To be eligible, enrollment must be verified on either the child (for which child care assistance is requested), either parent or either grandparent. A birth certificate is requested to verify parentage. Information of parentage may be shared with the local, Tribal or County Child Support Agency working on behalf of the custodial parent. Application must be filled out completely in order to begin the intake process.

If the child is the enrolled member, a copy of his/her tribal enrollment card can be provided in lieu of the Verification of Native American Descent form. If the child, parent or grandparent is from another federally recognized tribe, parent must provide tribal identification along with the contact information for that Tribe's enrollment office.

C. Referral Process from County

Applicants that have received MFIP in the past 6 months and/or may be eligible for MFIP child care (i.e., transition or transitional extension) through the county **MUST** apply for MFIP childcare. If found eligible to receive MFIP child care or transitional, applicants will be required to go through the county for child care, providing funds are available through the county.

If applicant is ineligible to receive MFIP child care or transitional; a written referral or a telephone contact from the county intake worker will be required during the intake process.

Applicants that are denied MFIP Child Care or Transitional Child Care due to non-compliance with child support will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

D. Verification of Residency

Applicants and their unlicensed child care providers must show proof of residency by submitting a current utility bill (i.e., rental agreement lease, telephone, water/sewer, insurance, 911 addresses). Both will be required during the intake process. Applicants who have one of their older siblings caring for the younger siblings **MUST** provide us with proof that the older sibling is NOT living in the household (proof: current utility bill, current driver's license, or current checking account, etc.).

E. Verification of Work, School, Training, or Job Search

1. **Employment**

An income verification form must be completed by the applicant and then forwarded by the applicant to the payroll department of their current employer for verification. The work verification form verifies the applicant's normal work schedule (i.e., Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, etc. and income). Applicant must work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week to qualify. The employer may fax the completed form to 983-4106.

2. **School Training**

If attending school, a list of classes and their times must be on file to verify their current status as a student. The class schedule is needed with the application. Applicant must show satisfactory progress with a passing grade of a 2.0 average or higher. A copy of the student's transcript must be turned in at the end of every semester to verify the GPA. Study time is allowed. In between class times will be considered as study time.

3. **Job Search**

If an applicant is actively seeking employment, child care assistance will be provided for job search activities for no more than 60 hours within a four month period. Applicants must complete and sign a job search form for each child care schedule submitted. Job search activities include filling out applications, interviews, and activities at Employment and Training or a Work Force Center.

4. **Self-Employment**

If an applicant is self-employed, their taxes from the prior year will be taken into account for eligibility purposes. A self-employment form must be signed and on file stating the number of hours that the applicant(s) may be away from home for this purpose, the average monthly income with check stubs for verification of income, and the type of self-employment in which the applicant is engaged.

F. Signed Release Form

Applicant must complete the Consent to Release of Information form to verify days or hours of employment of child care services anytime throughout the service year. A copy of timecards must be sent to the Child Care Assistance Specialist weekly or bi-weekly. The child care program will verify applicant's actual employment days/hours and compare them to the submitted child care hours submitted by the provider. This procedure is to avoid abuse of the program. No child care schedules will be processed and authorized for payment without a timecard. **No exceptions.**

G. Immunization

Immunizations are required for every child who is or may be receiving child care assistance. Verification records for immunizations must be signed by the parent and the child's physician stating immunizations required or verification of the date required immunizations will be given. A copy of immunization records from school or clinic will also be accepted.

H. Provider Statement

A Provider Statement must be filled out for every provider the parent chooses to use whether it is licensed or unlicensed. This must be on file before any payments can be made to the provider. When the provider statement is filled out and in the file of the parent, the provider is now a mandated reporter and is obligated by law to report any abuse upon the child for which they are caring.

1. Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect:

A mandatory reporter is a person who is required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Every state within the U.S. Territories has statutes that identify mandatory reports of child maltreatment and specify the circumstances under which they are to report.

A “person responsible for a child’s care” is defined in state law to include a parent, guardian, teacher, school administrator, daycare provider, babysitter (paid or unpaid), a counselor, coach or other lawful custodian with responsibilities of care for the child.

The failure of a mandated reporter to report knowledge of reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect is a criminal misdemeanor offense.

2. Licensed Providers contracts

If applicant is using a licensed provider, a copy of your contract is due in the child care office before payments can be made for children in the program. A copy with the provider’s and the parent’s signature is required to verify both parties agree on the content in the contract. Payments will be made according to what is defined in the contract, NOT to exceed the program’s maximum reimbursement rates. Anything over the WECCP’s child care rates will be the responsibility of the parent.

3. Unlicensed Providers Criminal Background Check

If an applicant is using a legally unlicensed provider, the criminal background check (CBGC) forms must be completed and signed with provider’s original signature and returned to the WECCP. Payment to Child Care Provider (unlicensed) will not be made until that provider has passed a Criminal Background Check. A limit of four (4) CBGC per applicant will be paid by the WECCP. The parent will need to pay for additional CBGC performed.

The WECCP requires background checks on **ALL INDIVIDUALS** (13 years and older) who have access to children receiving child care assistance and/or who are in a home that is to be used for child care. These forms must be signed and returned promptly. *** Failure to return the signed form could result in temporary suspension of child care assistance to the individual providing care.** These confidential forms will be on file at the White Earth Child Care Program for the parent’s viewing. A copy of any negative results may be mailed to the provider upon request by the parent, once it is received at the WECCP. Issues of concern that could result in a negative result are, *but not limited to:* **Homicides-Sex Crimes-Arson-Incest-Crimes against Persons- Crimes of Compulsion-Theft and Burglary- Obscene Telephone Calls-Child Abuse/Neglect-Child Protection/Substantiated or Unsubstantiated Reports or Assault.**

4. Disqualification Factors

Any unlicensed provider who has had a child protection case against them will automatically be disqualified for providing care under the program. For verification of child protection cases, names will be discussed between local counties and Indian Child Welfare to determine disqualification factors.

5. Drug Screening

The White Earth Reservation Tribal Council and the White Earth Child Care Program strive for a drug free environment for children. A provider has an obligation to be in suitable mental and physical conditions while providing child care. The White Earth Child Care Program is concerned and requires a drug-free child care environment for the children.

The use, possession, sale or purchase of any illegal drug or prescription drug without a valid prescription is prohibited. Any violation of this policy will result in **immediate termination of payment from the Child Care Program.**

All child care and/or licensed homes will be subject to testing for drugs and/or alcohol or a chemical dependency assessment upon request when *****"reasonable cause"** is believed that a child care provider is abusing drugs or alcohol. If a provider fails the drug screening test, he/she will be offered an opportunity for an assessment with a Chemical Dependency Counselor. The provider must authorize a copy of the assessment results to be provided to the child care program. The time frame for a Rule 25 will be 1 month from drug screening. The WECCP will *review* the Chemical Dependency Counselor's recommendation and evaluate the *status* of his/her suitability to provide care. If the WECCP Staff feel that children placed with the provider are at *risk*, the program has the right to refuse child care payments to this provider and/or report the findings to the parents and Indian Child Welfare.

A drug test that is refused will be considered positive to the White Earth Child Care Program and a Child Care Provider who *refuses* to comply with a drug screening test or a chemical dependency assessment will be subject to **immediate termination of payment from the Child Care Program.**

A Confidential letter noting a *negative or positive* result will be sent to the Director of the Child Care Program stating the results of the test. The Director will notify the Child Care Provider and parent(s) of the results and will file them in the parents' child care file.

*****"Reasonable Cause" includes, but not limited to:**

1. Involvement in or responsible for an accident that caused or could have caused serious injury to a child care child.
2. Habits that appear the result of impaired judgment that may be caused by drugs or alcohol.
3. Credible reports received by a Child Care Staff, Advisory Board members, or Tribal Council members.

J. Health & Safety Checklist

A health and safety checklist form must be completed by the parent and (unlicensed) provider.

Health & Safety items are available at no charge to new Child Care Providers who have never received them before from the program: **First Aid Kits, Fire Extinguishers, Health & Safety Informational Packets, Smoke Alarms, and if caring for infants or toddlers: Safety Gates, Electrical Outlets Covers, and Door/Drawer Covers.**

K. Training

All providers (licensed and unlicensed) must complete Quality Child Care Education (provided by WECCP bi-monthly). Unlicensed providers must attend this training session 2 hours per year, as well as any other mandatory training that develops. 4 hours per year of health and safety training is required.

From time to time, the WECCP will send out notices of upcoming training sessions. Legally unlicensed providers (providers that care for only one family) are encouraged to attend these informational sessions. The WECCP can pay for the training registration costs to ensure the health and safety of the children in their care is met.

II. Eligibility – Application Approval

When all verification forms listed in Section I have been provided, the effective date of eligibility is one of the following, whichever is later:

1. The date all required forms have been supplied, or
2. The beginning date of employment, education, or job search, or
3. When funds become available

Parents will receive an incomplete notice within 14 working days of application date if application is incomplete or applicant has not turned in the necessary paperwork to complete file. Incomplete files will **not** be placed on the waiting list until it is complete and the necessary paperwork has been verified. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the WECCP received all required paperwork and verification.

Children who require child care assistance must be twelve years of age and younger, with the exception of special needs children. These children can be thirteen years of age and older (documentation is required from a medical doctor stating the child's special need).

It is expected that parents will schedule their time for employment, job search, or training purposes during the time when a child is also away from home, when possible.

If child care assistance is approved for an individual, child care will be authorized for the hours the client is working, job seeking, or attending training courses and **up to one hour travel time** (depending on the mileage to and from the destination).

The agency may reserve a family's position in the child care subsidy program for no more than sixty (60) days if the family is still in their service year. Examples include:

- 1). WECCP has no contact from a parent who seems to be eligible, but has not turned in hours for 60 days; this parent will be terminated unless arrangements have been made with the Child Care Director and does not exceed 90 days of no usage.
- 2). Due to a change in circumstances beyond a parent's control, and/or one of the parents are home with children. If this occurs during the service year we can keep the file open for 60 days. After that time, the family's childcare assistance will be terminated unless arrangements have been made with the Child Care Director.
- 3). If a parent is attending school or works at a school, the file may be placed on hold during the entire summer if he or she does not attend summer school and does not find employment. Child care assistance will resume when classes resume.

Child care cannot be authorized unless sufficient funds are available. An eligible applicant is not guaranteed assistance unless funding is available. You cannot waive or reduce your salary, child support, or other sources of income in order to become eligible for, or to remain eligible for, the child care subsidy program.

A. Child Care Needs Form

During the intake appointment, the Child Care Specialist will accept all completed forms from the applicant. The Child Care Need form helps provide the WECCP in determining the need of child care for that parent's service year.

B. Eligibility Certification Form

Once all the required forms are on file and the file is deemed complete by the Child Care Specialist, the complete file is then certified eligible by the Child Care Director and put on the program if funds are available or placed on the waiting list until funds are available.

C. Waiting List Status

When funds are not available and a parent's file is found complete and eligible for assistance, the parent will be placed on the waiting list according to the date in which the file was completed and **NOT** the date on the original application. Applicants will be taken off the waiting list in the order in which they were received.

The applicant's service year will be effective the date he/she is taken off the waiting list and **NOT** the date of the application.

D. Approval date for service year

A family is eligible for services for **one year** from the time child care assistance is approved. If a child leaves the home to live in another home, child care assistance cannot be given for the period that the child is not in the home, nor can the assistance be transferred to another parent or guardian. Any case that is in question will be looked over carefully by the Director, and a final decision made. **It is the parent's responsibility to re-apply for child care assistance when their service year ends. No notifications are sent out stating that a parent's service year is up.**

Service years cannot be extended beyond the 12 month period.E. Notification

The Child Care Director will notify an applicant by mail when he/she becomes eligible. This will include the dates child care is authorized, notification of monthly co-payment (according to income guidelines), and the number of hours authorized per day.

The provider will also be sent information on how to record the hours children are in care and when to send in these hours. A calendar will be included in this packet stating when providers need to send in schedules and when to expect payment. A full service year supply of child care schedules should be included along with this information.

G. Status Changes

The family must report any changes in status within 10 days. The changes that must be reported include:

1. Address change (moved to new residence, provide verification of new residence)
2. Change in household size
3. Any changes in public assistance status (G.A., MFIP, Unemployment)
4. Termination of employment: voluntary or involuntary
5. Change in marital status
6. The start of another job or education training activity
7. Any change in job search status.

Failure to report any of these is just cause for denial of continued eligibility and your case will be closed. NO EXCEPTIONS are allowed.

Parents must notify the child care program of withdrawal or temporary withdrawal from the program. **Parents are required to contact the agency at least 15 days in advance of withdrawal.**

Parents not using child care for more than 60 days and that have not contacted the White Earth Child Care Office will have their file closed.

III. Waiting List

When a family requests information about child care assistance, the agency shall perform a preliminary determination of eligibility. If it appears that a family is eligible and funds are not immediately available, the agency will accept a completed application and add the family to the waiting list. Families on the waiting list shall be moved into the child care subsidy program as funding permits. *This program is a first come first serve basis.*

IV. Approved Child Care Hours

The number of hours authorized depends on the type of activity of the parent(s) and the amount of travel time required each day.

A maximum of sixty hours of child care can be approved per week. Child care is normally approved for the hours the client is working, actually job seeking, or attending training and will include up to one hour of travel time. Requests for any extra hours not authorized will need prior approval of the agency staff person and verification from employer/school that additional time is needed. **The maximum is 11 hours per day per child.**

Any parent who used child care assistance and does not actually attend school or work—but uses it for a personal day will be to have engaged in fraudulent practices and possibly terminated from the program. The parent is responsible to pay the provider for any personal days such as shopping, doctor appointments, etc.

1. Employment

Child care assistance during employment shall be approved for all hours of work including break and meal-time and up to one hour per day travel time not to exceed the 11 hour maximum. Child care hours will then be compared between provider's child care schedule submitted to actual work hours submitted from applicant's employer (time card, punch detail sheet, written statement from employer stating hours actual worked). Personal leave or vacation leave days/hours used while child(ren) are at child care will not be paid by the Program. These hours will be marked off. Timecards are required weekly or bi-weekly. It is the parent's responsibility to get them to the Child Care Assistance Specialist. They must be signed by the supervisor.

2. Job Search

Job search includes contacting and attending interviews of various employers. Child care assistance will be provided for job search activities for no more than 60 hours within a four month period. Applicants will be referred to the Employment and Training unit or Work Force Center for job search assistance. A job search form must be completed and submitted with the child care schedule.

3. Education and Training

Child Care assistance during education or training shall be approved for all hours of the education program including time between nonconsecutive classes and up to one hour per day for travel time. Full-time students who do not have an open period between classes shall receive up to two hours per week for study and academic appointments. A full-time student is enrolled in the minimum equivalent of 12 credits or 20 hours of classroom training per week. Students are required to submit class schedules each quarter or semester and must maintain a 2.0 grade point average with documentation at mid-terms and the end of each quarter or semester.

V. Payments to Providers

A. Child Care Schedules

The child care schedules must be filled out once or twice a month and returned to the WECCP office where it will be reviewed for accuracy, approved, and then sent to the accounting office for payment. Payments are set according to the child care schedule calendars. Checks are mailed out from accounting office and cannot be picked up any sooner. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Each schedule **must** be signed by both the parent and the provider at the end of each pay period, not in advance and must include the provider's address and social security number or IEN number. Parents are asked to review the schedule for accuracy before signing.

Schedules that are **not** received in our office by Tuesday noon (see child care schedule calendar), will need to be held for the next accounts payable date. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

Child care schedules must be turned in no later than 30 days past the service date to ensure payment. Schedules turned in later than 30 days will not be honored and will be the parent's responsibility to pay to the provider.

Parent's are responsible to pay the provider for any personal hours. The WECCP can only pay for actual work hours.

If children are enrolled in school or Headstart, WECCP will not pay for child care when they should be in school (see absent day forms).

B. Accounts Receivable/Payable Schedule

Upon receiving the child care schedule, WECCP staff will verify hours/signatures, deduct the parent's monthly co-payment, and then calculate the hours and pay the required rate (unlicensed, licensed or center rate).

Child Care Schedules must be turned in on a timely matter, schedules with dates more than 30 days old will not be honored and it will be the Parent's responsibility to pay to the Provider. Dates submitted that are more than 30 days old will be marked off the schedules and we will only pay for dates turned in less than 30 days old.

If the child care services are approved by the WECCP staff, the provider will receive payment according to the child care schedule calendars.

C. Calendar

A child care schedule calendar is given to every parent and provider on child care assistance. Each child care calendar will have the dates to submit schedules and when to expect payment, days the WECCP is closed as well as training opportunities, health & safety information, and holidays. The calendar can also be viewed online at our website www.whiteearthchildcare.com.

VI. Co-Payments

The income guidelines are a fixed percent of the annual gross income according to the basic sliding fee scale. Also shown on the basic sliding fee scale are amounts listed for co-payments. All families participating in the basic sliding fee program must pay a monthly co-payment.

A. Parent responsibility

The child care program will only pay for the amount of days and hours that are agreed upon at the time of application approval or for which a prior authorization is in place.

Upon eligibility, the applicant or applicants are informed of the amount of their monthly co-payment. **The co-payment fee should be paid to the provider by money order, cash or check payable to the Child Care Provider.** The co-payments are due by the last day of each month. The provider is then required to give the parent a receipt for each monthly co-payment stating the amount, the month of the co-payment, and signed by the child care provider. These monthly parent co-payments are then deducted from the child care provider's check, which is issued by the Child Care Program/Finance Department.

Co-payments are to be made to the provider on a monthly basis. This transaction will be between the parent and the provider to arrange a payment plan. **Providers must notify the WECCP of late co-payments.** Any applicant with late co-payments past one month will get a notice from the WECCP acknowledging a co-payment has been missed and stating that their child care will be on hold until the co-payment is received by the provider. Co-payments later than two months will result in a termination of assistance if not paid in a timely manner to the provider.

When care is done in the parent's home, the provider will be legally considered domestic help and is required to earn at least minimum wage on top of the potential for liability for unemployment compensation, which would be the responsibility of the parents to pay.

The parent must notify the program within five days before changing child care providers, and notified in advance, of any temporary providers, to ensure that all provider requirements are met. Providers must meet all unlicensed child care provider requirements before payments can be made.

Parents are responsible for making their own child care provider arrangements, although there are guidelines that must be followed in choosing one. The parents are responsible for choosing the provider that best meets the needs of their family. The WECCP encourages the use of licensed child care providers. Any and all providers must ensure that parents have complete and total access to their children while in their care. The WECCP has a list of tribally licensed providers and licensed providers for the following counties: Becker, Mahnomen and Clearwater or the parent may contact a local CCR&R at: 1-800-941-7003 or 1-800-450-1385

Parents may use a legally unlicensed caregiver if they meet the following requirements:

- 1. Providers must be over the age of eighteen.**
- 2. Providers must not be living in the same household as the parent/children.**
- 3. By White Earth Reservation law, the provider must only care for one family's children other than their own; with a maximum of five (5) children in the provider's care (provider's own children are to be included in this number).**
- 4. The provider must pass a criminal background check prior to payment.**
- 5. CPR training/education is encouraged.**

B. Provider responsibilities

In these cases, a Provider's Statement, signed by both the parent and the provider, will need to be on file stating that each of these requirements has been met. The WECCP will process the Criminal Background Checks on every provider. If an unlicensed provider has had a criminal background check done within the last 30 days, the provider will need to acquire a copy of that completed check and have it sent to the WECCP. A new Provider's statement and Criminal Background check is required on every new or back-up child care provider used (with a limit of four (4) CBGC per service year being paid by the WECCP).

If a child care provider charges more than the maximum rates of the program, the parent will need to set up an agreement to pay for the balance. The WECCP **does not** pay for child care provider's vacation time or guaranteed slot rates. The rates set for White Earth Reservation Child Care Program is \$1.70 per hour per child for unlicensed providers and the standard rate shown in a licensed day care provider policy handbook. The WECCP only pays for hours that the child is in the provider's care (less parent's personal leave or if the child is in school).

Hours turned in by the provider must have a parent's signature in order to be processed. Failure to sign the schedules may result in a late payment to the provider. The WECCP will not be held responsible for any late fees that may be incurred.

School-age children: Any provider submitting for child care during normal school hours for children ages 5-12 years old (including Head Start children) must submit an absentee form (included in provider packet).

C. Late Co-payments

If a parent fails to pay the monthly co-payment, there will be a ten-day grace period. If payment is not received after the ten-day grace period, the child care provider must notify the Child Care Program staff immediately. **The Child Care Program will then send a notice of possible suspension of child care assistance. For any co-payments over 30 days past due, child care assistance will be stopped until full payment is received. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS. Any co-payment later than 60 days will be just cause to drop applicant from the program; the applicant's file will then be closed. Random calls to the child care provider will be made through out the year to ensure co-payments have been made.**

VI. Tax Questions

A. Earned Income Tax Credit

This is a tax credit for people who have a child and are in a low-income bracket. If your income is below \$35,535 (or \$40,363 for 2 or more children) in the past year, you may be able to claim this credit. You may receive a check from the IRS, have your taxes reduced, or receive a refund even if you have a tax obligation. To receive this tax credit at the end of the filing year, you must file tax Form 1040 or 1040A. To receive this tax credit in advance added to your regular paycheck, you must file a W-5 form with your employer. (The Advance Earned Income Credit Form).

B. Federal Child and Dependent Care Credit

This tax credit can only be used to reduce your federal income tax. Unlike the earned income tax credit, the amount of credit that exceeds the tax is nonrefundable. You qualify for the credit you pay someone to provide care for your child or dependent so you can work or look for work. Your child or dependent must be under 13 years old unless he or she is disabled. To qualify as your dependent, you must have provided at least fifty percent of the money used to support the child during the year. Child Care Program recipients are eligible to claim their co-payments as a child care expense. Parent's can use their monthly co-payment receipts to claim child care credits.

C. Minnesota Child and Dependent Care Credit

You may be eligible for a refund of your child care expenses. To qualify for this credit, you must qualify for the Federal Child and Dependent Care Credit and have household income of less than \$36,030. This credit is based on your expenses for child care; you must file Minnesota M-ICD with either form M-1 or M-1A. Also, if you did not file a federal income tax return, you will also have to submit a complete federal form #2441 with your Minnesota return. You may be eligible for the latter two tax credits even if you have no State of Federal tax liability.

All providers receive a 1099 on anything over \$400 and federal taxes on anything over \$600. **NO TAXES ARE TAKEN OUT OF CHECKS ISSUED TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS. PAYING TAXES ON THIS INCOME IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.** Providers will get a Form 1099 at the end of the year from the Tribal Council to file with the IRS or state of MN.

The WECCP encourages all providers to talk to their tax representative about child care.

VII. Rights and Responsibilities

A. Right to keep information about you private (Data Privacy).

Most of the information the WECCP collects about parents will be classified as private. That means the parent and the government agencies that need the information can see it; others cannot without a signed release from the parent. Occasionally statistics and other anonymous data will be taken from the information collected. This is public and open to anyone, but it will not identify individuals in any way.

B. Purpose of Information

Information parents are asked to provide will be used to determine whether they are eligible for child care assistance and to enable the WECCP to collect federal or state funds for the services provided, and to develop audit programs. Individuals are not legally required to provide any information and may refuse to do so. However, in choosing not to give information, individuals will probably not be able to receive the services for which they are applying.

We have tried to include all areas of the child care subsidy program. If you have any questions that are not addressed here, please call the Child Care Director, at (218) 983-3285, Ext. 1407