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PROVIDER INFORMATIONAL NOTICE

TO: Early Intervention Direct Service Providers and Payees

FROM: Amy S. Tarr, Chief *Amy*
Bureau of Early Intervention

DATE: July 22, 2014

RE: New Nepotism Policy and Procedures to Child & Family Connections (CFC) Offices

This information is being shared with you in order for you to understand the importance of ensuring fair and equitable choice of providers. We wanted you to know that effective immediately, all CFCs are subject to the attached Nepotism policy and procedures.

As part of the policy and procedures that is effective immediately, CFC employees may not issue authorizations, or influence another CFC employee to issue authorizations, to immediate family members or individuals who live in his/her household. The definition of "immediate family member" is in the policy. As discussed in the policy, authorizations may be created to extended family members as long as the CFC employee discloses the relationship as required by the policy, enters into an Individualized Nepotism Plan with the CFC Manager, and follows the Provider Selection Policy.

The attached policy and procedures will be outlined in the next release of the CFC Procedure Manual. Until then, all CFC employees must adhere to the Nepotism and Provider Selection Policy and Procedures.

If you have any questions, you may put the question(s) in writing and submit them to the Bureau by fax at 217/524-6248.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Attachment: Nepotism and Provider Selection Policy and Procedures

Nepotism and Provider Selection Policy and Procedures

Nepotism Policy and Procedures

To ensure authorizations are issued in accordance with the Provider Selection Policy found below, all Employees are subject to the following Nepotism policy and procedures.

A CFC employee may not issue authorizations, or influence another CFC employee to issue authorizations, to immediate family members or individuals who live in his/her household. Authorizations may be created to extended family members as long as the CFC employee discloses the relationship in the Nepotism Disclosure Form, enters into an Individualized Nepotism Plan with the CFC Manager, and follows the Provider Selection Policy, all discussed below.

At the time of hire and each July 1 thereafter, each CFC employee must complete a Nepotism Disclosure Form (NDF). The CFC Program Manager is responsible for reviewing the NDF, and the NDF shall be maintained in the employee's employment file. If an employee discloses a provider or provider agency who is an immediate family member or lives in his/her household, the employee may not issue authorizations to that provider or provider agency, or influence another employee to issue authorizations to that provider or provider agency. The CFC Program Manager is responsible for making sure such authorizations do not occur.

If an employee discloses an extended family member, the CFC Program Manager shall develop a written Individualized Nepotism Plan (INP) for that employee to ensure compliance with the Provider Selection Policy. The INP shall be submitted for review to the CFC's EI Specialist at the Bureau within 30 days of the disclosure by the CFC employee. The CFC Program Manager must obtain Bureau approval of the INP. The employee will receive a copy of the final INP and the INP shall be maintained in the employee's employment file.

On the first day of the annual CFC Compliance Monitoring, the CFC Program Manager shall provide EI Monitoring with a copy of any/all NDFs and INPs. EI Monitoring will review this documentation, and review necessary related documentation to ensure compliance.

An immediate family member is defined as one of the following relationships by blood – parent, child, brother, sister; and relationship by marriage- husband, wife, step-parent, stepchild, brother-in-law, son-in law, daughter-in law, half-brother, half-sister and cohabitating couples/significant others.

An extended family member is defined as one of the following relationships by blood-grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin; and relationship by marriage- aunt, uncle, nephew, and niece.

Provider Selection Policy and Procedures

The CFC shall ensure Service Coordinators follow the Provider Selection Policy unless a CFC-specific plan of provider selection that has been submitted and approved by the Bureau with written documentation maintained.

Service Coordinators shall provide families with provider choice to the fullest extent possible. CFCs shall require providers to forward a "resume" or "curriculum vite" to include in a booklet or electronic format to be presented to each family. The Service Coordinator shall never recommend a provider over another based upon personal preference. The final selection of the provider should be the family's based on the individual circumstances of that child/family. The choice of providers offered to the family may be limited due to the following:

Initial Evaluating Providers

Service Coordinators shall consider the developmental needs of the child for determining any expertise or experience of one evaluator provider over another.

If a family does not speak English, the Service Coordinator shall check for a bilingual evaluator provider(s). If a bilingual evaluator provider is available, the family shall be given the bilingual evaluator provider(s) to choose from.

No single evaluator provider may evaluate a single child as two discipline types.

The number of credentialed and enrolled EI evaluator providers in a geographic region may be limited.

After these factors are considered, the Service Coordinator shall offer the family all available evaluator providers to perform the initial evaluations/assessments. The CFCs must offer all available evaluator providers and allow the family to choose and rank, in order of preference, 3 to 5 providers (if appropriate) and then contact the evaluator providers in the preference of the family for openings to evaluate/assess the child.

Direct Service Providers

Private insurance policies or other payors (i.e. DSCC) may require the use of network providers, except as specified in Chapter 10.0: *Public and Private Insurance Use Determination* of the CFC Procedure Manual.

Service Coordinators shall consider the developmental needs of the child for determining any expertise or experience of one service provider over another.

If a family does not speak English, the Service Coordinator shall check for a bilingual service provider(s). If a bilingual service provider is available, the family shall be given the bilingual service provider(s) to choose from.

No single service provider may provide EI services to a single child as two discipline types.

The number of credentialed and enrolled EI service providers in a geographic region may be limited.

After these factors are considered, the Service Coordinator shall offer the family all available service providers. The CFCs must offer all available providers and allow the family to choose and rank, in order of preference, 3 to 5 service providers (if appropriate) and then contact the service providers in the preference of the parent for openings to evaluate/assess the child.