

## OVERVIEW - BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

### CHILD CARE 1-8

#### Provider Eligibility - Overview

**Supersedes:** Child Care 1-8 (3/1/14)

**References:** Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA;  
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302,  
37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM; 45 CFR Part 98

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#### General Rule

Eligible child care providers are listed in ARM 37.80.101.

#### Parental Access to Child in Care

The provider must allow unlimited parental access to the parent's children and to the child care facility during normal hours of the facility's operation, whenever the children are in the provider's care.

#### No Discrimination

The child care provider may not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, sex, religion, or handicap.

#### Provider Requirements

A child care provider must comply with all state regulations pertaining to their facility type as outlined in the Administrative Rules of Montana [ARM] 37.95.

The provider cannot receive child care scholarship payments if they are related to the child in any of the following ways:

- The child care provider is the child's parent.
- The child care facility is owned, entirely or in part, by the parent.
- The child care provider is a member of the child's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] Cash assistance unit.
- The child's provider is a member of the child's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship household unit that is used to determine eligibility.

#### Child's Relationship to Care Provider

The provider is considered a relative of the child as defined under the "eligible child care provider" in 658P(5) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

### **Providers Licensed by Another Entity**

Out-of-jurisdiction providers must be approved by the Department of Public Health and Human Services [DPHHS] Quality Assurance Division [QAD] Child Care Licensing Program.

Montana currently recognizes select providers in the following political boundaries:

- ❑ The state must be granted permission to register or license any child care facility located on tribal reservations.
- ❑ Malmstrom Air Force Base, near Great Falls

### **Providers Shall Maintain Sign-in/Sign-out Sheets**

All child care providers including those providing care in the child's home shall maintain current sign-in/sign-out records for each child receiving child care assistance and utilize them as follows:

- ❑ Each time the child enters or leaves the facility identified on the Authorization Plan, the parent or other individual authorized to deliver or pick up the child shall sign the sign-in/sign-out sheet. An electronic signature system may be used if it employs a unique and confidential identification process for individuals. With electronic systems, providers must ensure verification that records are not able to be changed without parental involvement. If records can be changed, providers must have a policy in place which parents manually sign off on that the sign in and out sheets are true and correct.
- ❑ Sign-in/sign-out records must indicate the facility name and location, the child's name, the date, the hour, and the minute when the child enters and leaves the facility identified on the Authorization Plan. All children in attendance on a given day must be on the same sign-in/sign-out record and not be divided by family.
- ❑ The provider shall make their sign-in/sign-out records available to child care resource and referral agency staff and state and local government health, safety, or law enforcement representatives upon request.
- ❑ The provider shall keep sign-in/sign-out records for five years beyond the date of attendance.
- ❑ The provider shall manage sign-in/sign-out sheets in a manner which protects the identity of families receiving scholarship assistance but does not single them out.

### **Providers Shall Allow Access to Facility and Records**

A child care provider shall allow access to their child care setting and child records during business hours to the following personnel:

- employees or other agents of state or local government;
- Child Care Resource and Referral [CCR&R] personnel requesting to review Child care services; and
- Health, building or fire officials investigating child care facility health and safety issues.

### **Providers Losing Their Status Shall Notify Parents**

Child care providers shall maintain their License, Registration, or Relative Care Provider status.

If they lose their provider status for any reason, they shall immediately notify the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship families with children in their care. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is not paid to a provider who is not licensed, registered, or legally certified by

the State of Montana. The provider may not bill the household for payments denied by the department due to the provider's failure to comply with the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program policy and licensing or registration requirements.

**Provider Rights and Responsibilities**

Child care providers serving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship families shall read and submit a "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" Agreement" form online at [www.bestbeginnings.mt.gov](http://www.bestbeginnings.mt.gov). The local CCR&R shall ensure that Rights and Responsibility forms have been submitted for each provider serving a scholarship family. Providers may not be approved to provide services or may experience a delay in payments until the form has been received electronically.

When policy changes require revisions to the "Provider Rights & Responsibilities Agreement" form, the ECSB will update the form on the web site and notify all programs statewide that are currently receiving scholarship payments. All providers will have to re-submit the revised form.