

§ 9858e. Activities to improve the quality of child care

(a) Reservation

(1) Reservation for activities relating to the quality of child care services

A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter for a fiscal year referred to in paragraph (2) shall reserve and use a portion of such funds, in accordance with paragraph (2), for activities provided directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities, that are designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care, and is in alignment with a Statewide assessment of the State's needs to carry out such services and care, provided in accordance with this subchapter.

(2) Amount of reservations

Such State shall reserve and use—

(A) to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1), not less than—

(i) 7 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first and second full fiscal years after November 19, 2014;

(ii) 8 percent of such funds for the third and fourth full fiscal years after November 19, 2014; and

(iii) 9 percent of such funds for the fifth and each succeeding full fiscal year after November 19, 2014; and

(B) in addition to the funds reserved under subparagraph (A), 3 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1) received not later than the second full fiscal year after November 19, 2014, and received for each succeeding full fiscal year, to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b)(4), as such activities relate to the quality of care for infants and toddlers.

(3) State reservation amount

Nothing in this subsection shall preclude the State from reserving a larger percentage of funds to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b).

(b) Activities

Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to carry out no fewer than one of the following activities that will improve the quality of child care services provided in the State:

(1) Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce through activities such as those included under section 9858c(c)(2)(G) of this title, in addition to—

(A) offering training and professional development opportunities for child care providers that relate to the use of scientifically-based, developmentally-appropriate and age-appropriate strategies to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those related to nutrition and physical activity, and offering specialized training for child care providers caring for those populations prioritized in section 9858c(c)(2)(Q) of this title, and children with disabilities;

(B) incorporating the effective use of data to guide program improvement;

(C) including effective behavior management strategies and training, including positive behavior interventions and support models, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors, including reducing expulsions of preschool-aged children for such behaviors;

(E)¹ providing training and outreach on engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children's positive development;

(F) providing training corresponding to the nutritional and physical activity needs of children to promote healthy development;

(G) providing training or professional development for child care providers regarding the early neurological development of children; and

(H) connecting child care staff members of child care providers with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, that would assist child care staff members in pursuing relevant postsecondary training.

(2) Improving upon the development or implementation of the early learning and developmental guidelines described in section 9858c(c)(2)(T) of this title by providing technical assistance to eligible child care providers that enhances the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development, including early childhood development, of participating preschool and school-aged children and supports their overall well-being.

(3) Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating system for child care providers and services, which may—

(A) support and assess the quality of child care providers in the State;

(B) build on State licensing standards and other State regulatory standards for such providers;

(C) be designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers and services;

(D) describe the safety of child care facilities;

(E) build the capacity of State early childhood programs and communities to promote parents' and families' understanding of the State's early childhood system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled;

(F) provide, to the maximum extent practicable, financial incentives and other supports designed to expand the full diversity of child care options and help child care providers improve the quality of services; and

(G) accommodate a variety of distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care, including but not limited to, those practiced in faith-based settings, community-based settings, child-centered settings, or similar settings that offer a distinctive approach to early childhood development.

¹ So in original. No subpar. (D) has been enacted.

(4) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers through activities, which may include—

(A) establishing or expanding high-quality community or neighborhood-based family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order to improve the quality of early childhood services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to infants and toddlers from low-income families;

(B) establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks;

(C) promoting and expanding child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers through training and professional development; coaching and technical assistance on this age group's unique needs from statewide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists; and improved coordination with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

(D) if applicable, developing infant and toddler components within the State's quality rating system described in paragraph (3) for child care providers for infants and toddlers, or the development of infant and toddler components in a State's child care licensing regulations or early learning and development guidelines;

(E) improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy to understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care; and

(F) carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler cognitive and physical development, or infant and toddler well-being, including providing health and safety training (including training in safe sleep practices, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for providers and caregivers.

(5) Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services.

(6) Facilitating compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State licensing standards.

(7) Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State, including evaluating how such programs positively impact children.

(8) Supporting child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality.

(9) Supporting State or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development.

(10) Carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of child care services provided in the State, and for which measurement of outcomes relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or entry to kindergarten is possible.

(c) Certification

Beginning with fiscal year 2016, at the beginning of each fiscal year, the State shall annually submit to the Secretary a certification containing an assurance that the State was in compliance with subsection (a) during the preceding fiscal year and a description of how the State used funds received under this subchapter to comply with subsection (a) during that preceding fiscal year.

(d) Reporting requirements

Each State receiving funds under this subchapter shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Secretary, which shall include information about—

(1) the amount of funds that are reserved under subsection (a);

(2) the activities carried out under this section; and

(3) the measures that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State.

(e) Technical assistance

The Secretary shall offer technical assistance, in accordance with section 9858g(a)(3) of this title, which may include technical assistance through the use of grants or cooperative agreements, to States for the activities described in subsection (b) at the request of the State.

(f) Construction

Nothing in this section shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to regulate, direct, dictate, or place conditions (outside of what is required by this subchapter) on a State adopting specific State child care quality activities or progress in implementing those activities.

(Pub. L. 97-35, title VI, § 658G, as added Pub. L. 101-508, title V, § 5082(2), Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1388-241; amended Pub. L. 102-401, § 3(a), Oct. 7, 1992, 106 Stat. 1959; Pub. L. 102-586, § 8(c)(1), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5036; Pub. L. 104-193, title VI, § 607, Aug. 22, 1996, 110 Stat. 2283; Pub. L. 113-186, § 6, Nov. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 1987.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(4)(C), is title VI of Pub. L. 91-230, Apr. 13, 1970, 84 Stat. 175. Part C of the Act is classified generally to subchapter III (§1431 et seq.) of chapter 33 of Title 20, Education. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 1400 of Title 20 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2014—Pub. L. 113-186 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: "A State that re-

ceives funds to carry out this subchapter for a fiscal year, shall use not less than 4 percent of the amount of such funds for activities that are designed to provide comprehensive consumer education to parents and the public, activities that increase parental choice, and activities designed to improve the quality and availability of child care (such as resource and referral services).”

1996—Pub. L. 104-193 reenacted section catchline without change and amended text generally, substituting current provisions for provisions requiring State receiving financial assistance under this subchapter to utilize not less than 20 percent of such assistance for one or more of following: resource and referral programs, grants or loans to assist in meeting State and local standards, monitoring of compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements, training, or improving salaries or other compensation to staff.

1992—Pub. L. 102-401 and Pub. L. 102-586 made identical technical corrections to directory language of Pub. L. 101-508, §5082(2), which added this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1996 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 104-193 effective Oct. 1, 1996, see section 615 of Pub. L. 104-193, set out as a note under section 9858 of this title.

§ 9858f. Criminal background checks

(a) In general

A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter shall have in effect—

(1) requirements, policies, and procedures to require and conduct criminal background checks for child care staff members (including prospective child care staff members) of child care providers described in subsection (c)(1); and

(2) licensing, regulation, and registration requirements, as applicable, that prohibit the employment of child care staff members as described in subsection (c).

(b) Requirements

A criminal background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a search of the State criminal and sex offender registry or repository in the State where the child care staff member resides, and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years;

(2) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in the State where the child care staff member resides, and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years;

(3) a search of the National Crime Information Center;

(4) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and

(5) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.).

(c) Prohibitions

(1) Child care staff members

A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider that is receiving assistance under this subchapter if such individual—

(A) refuses to consent to the criminal background check described in subsection (b);

(B) knowingly makes a materially false statement in connection with such criminal background check;

(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); or

(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18;

(ii) child abuse or neglect;

(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

(iv) spousal abuse;

(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;

(vi) kidnapping;

(vii) arson;

(viii) physical assault or battery; or

(ix) subject to subsection (e)(4), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or

(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

(2) Child care providers

A child care provider described in subsection (i)(1) shall be ineligible for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter if the provider employs a staff member who is ineligible for employment under paragraph (1).

(d) Submission of requests for background checks

(1) In general

A child care provider covered by subsection (c) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a criminal background check described in subsection (b), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

(2) Staff members

Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who became a child care staff member before November 19, 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

(A) prior to the last day described in subsection (j)(1); and

(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

(3) Prospective staff members

Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after November 19, 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

(A) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

(B) not less than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.