

OCTOBER 1, 2020



CHILD CARE TRANSFER QUARTERLY REPORT

OCTOBER 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CDSS

OVERVIEW:

California is committed to a comprehensive, high-quality, and affordable child care and development system that provides a whole-family approach to the needs of each child. To achieve this vision and streamline programs, child care and development programs currently administered by the California Department of Education (CDE) will be transferred to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), effective July 1, 2021. The CDSS and CDE will continue to collaborate to ensure that child care and development programs support children's educational development and their transition to preschool and/or elementary school; that providers have access to equitable quality improvement supports that reflect best practices; and that administrative barriers to program access are eliminated so that contractors and providers can focus on positive child and family outcomes.

This is the first required report regarding this program transfer process. As such, this report contains an overview of the programs that will be transferred and transfer-related activities that have already occurred or will occur during the next nine months, as well as information regarding additional activities that will occur during the remainder of the transition.

The Early Childhood Development Act of 2020

The Early Childhood Development Act of 2020 (Senate Bill [SB] 98, Joint Legislative and Budget Committee, Chapter 24, Statutes of 2020), which authorized this transfer, states:

The state's system of early learning and care must become more integrated and coordinated to achieve its goals of promoting a high-quality, affordable, early childhood system designed to comprehensively and effectively serve children and families.

Social determinants of health, adverse childhood experiences, quality learning and care for children, and economic and other supports for the needs of families are critical determinants of life outcomes for children, and California's system of early learning and care must address inequities and disproportionalities.

From October 1, 2020, to December 31, 2024, inclusive, the department shall submit to the appropriate budget and policy committees of the Legislature, the Department of Finance, and the Early Childhood Policy Council a quarterly report that describes how the department is making progress on the transition required by this chapter, and how the department is furthering the intent of this transition.

(SB 98, 2020 pt 1.7, 10202a, 10202b)

Transferring Programs

The following programs and services will be transferred from the California Department of Education to the California Department of Social Services:

- Stages 2 and 3 of the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Child Care Programs
- General Child Care and Development Programs
- California Alternative payment programs (CAPP)
- California Migrant alternative payment programs
- California Migrant Child Care and Development Programs
- Child Care and Development services for children with severe disabilities
- Child Care and Development facilities capital outlay
- The Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program
- The California Head Start State Collaboration Office funded by collaboration grants
- The Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Local Child Care and Development Planning Councils
- The California Child Care Initiative Project
- Other Child Care Quality Improvement Projects
- The Child and Adult Care Food Program
- The Child Development Management Information System and other related data systems as they pertain to the programs, services, and systems above

Objectives

The CDSS currently operates many of the State's safety net programs, including California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), CalWORKs Stage 1 Child Care, CalWORKs home visiting, CalFresh (food stamps), several housing and homelessness programs, and child welfare services and foster care. The CDSS also provides oversight and enforcement for licensed child care centers and family child care homes through 19 regional licensing offices located throughout California. In addition to better integrating and coordinating child care and development programs, the transfer of programs to CDSS offers the opportunity to build upon prior efforts and further the State's policy objectives, including:

- Enabling a whole-family, human-centered approach to caring for children and supporting families disproportionately and inequitably impacted by social

determinants of health, in a multi-generational approach with the goal of disrupting poverty and supporting optimal child development, through simplification and coordination with programs across the California Health and Human Services Agency, as well as continued connection to education systems.

- Leveraging data-driven decision making across human service programs to enhance allocation of child care resources to maximize family access, improve child care program quality, support child care providers, and improve and evaluate child and family outcomes.
- Ensuring the broader subsidy system is focused on addressing the needs of the families most in need of services, in culturally and developmentally appropriate ways, including those most separated from opportunity due to race, geography, poverty, language access or other factors and those with variable work schedules and barriers to engaging in employment.
- Streamlining the CalWORKs child care programs by helping families transition smoothly from immediate, short-term child care needed as parents start work or preparation for work activities, to the stable, long-term child care necessary for the family to overcome barriers of paucity and achieve economic empowerment and children to have access to stable early learning opportunities.
- Integrating the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program with other child care and early learning subsidy programs achieving further connection to longer-term child care placements and increasing placement stability.
- Providing effective, uniform, and data-driven, trauma-informed care practices in early learning and care environments, to counter the harmful effects of adverse childhood experiences.
- Further establishing licensing as the foundation of health and safety in all settings and effectively integrating licensing with quality improvement efforts.

Roles & Responsibilities

California Department of Social Services & California Department of Education

The CDSS and CDE are responsible for partnering to ensure a smooth transfer that does not interrupt critical services and that seizes opportunities to improve upon existing systems and practices. To that end, the Departments will rely on a comprehensive work plan and timeline for the transfer. This includes the identification of staff impacted by the transfer, and preparations, in collaboration with CalHR and labor organizations, to integrate those staff into CDSS as of July 1, 2021. Throughout the transfer process, CDSS will post updates to the [Child Care Transfer](#) webpage, host and organize opportunities for stakeholder engagement, and develop, in partnership with CDE, future Quarterly Reports and a final Transfer Plan.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders have critical information to share with respect to continuity of, and improvements to, child care program services and processes. They will be invited and encouraged to participate in engagement opportunities throughout the transfer process, and beyond. To assist with stakeholder engagement, the Administration and CDE will utilize several existing forums, such as the Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) and discussions related to the Master Plan on Early Learning and Care, in addition to other transfer-specific forums organized by CDSS. The CDSS will also ensure that parents, caregivers and providers are supported to participate through the ECPC's Parent and Workforce Advisory Committees and additional discussions.

FIRST QUARTER PROGRESS:

Transfer Work Plan Development & Priorities

The CDSS and CDE are developing a comprehensive work plan that details deliverables and key milestones and that will support development of the Transition Plan due to the Legislature in March of 2021. The work plan will assist the Departments to prepare for effective administrative and operational changes, as well as for improvements in policies and practices that support children, families, and providers.

To begin some of the operational transfer work, CDSS and CDE have identified key lead persons for over twenty workgroups within the six topics listed below. These teams are sharing critical information and collaborating to drive their work forward. The workgroups include CDSS and CDE staff organized within the following six topic areas:

- **Contracts:** Responsible for identifying new and existing contracts to be included in the transfer, along with details pertaining to contract structures, funding, governance and oversight responsibilities, federal and state reporting requirements, new and existing grant responsibilities, data sharing and interagency agreements, scheduling and timing of renewals if applicable, and identification of critical stakeholders and program leads.
- **Human Resources & Labor Relations:** Responsible for identifying positions to be included in the transfer, coordination with CalHR and Labor Relations, identification and completion of required staff training, completion of required documentation to support staff movements, coordination of staff on-boarding materials, and support of identified staffing needs.
- **Facilities & Equipment:** Responsible for identifying the physical aspects of the transfer, including, but not limited to, identification of staff office space and workstations, procurement or migration of required equipment and supplies, identification of applicable reasonable accommodations, and coordination of other facility and equipment access requirements.
- **Data Systems & Infrastructure:** Responsible for identifying new and existing data systems and information technology infrastructures to be included in the transfer, along with details pertaining to the types and purpose or functionality of

data systems, current supported platforms and licensing renewals, funding and oversight responsibility of data systems, state and federal reporting requirements, deliverables pertaining to new and existing data sharing agreements, grants, and other agreements, identification of new and existing research activities, identification of stakeholders and stakeholder engagement activities as they relate to data systems, and other public facing reports, data warehousing and information technology infrastructure necessary to support the ongoing functions of identified data systems.

- **Program & Policy:** Responsible for policy alignment, ensuring a seamless transfer of programs without disruption of services for families, service providers, and program administrators. Will ensure that adoption and thorough review be made of existing laws, regulations and guidance to allow for necessary flexibility, further ensuring continuity of care and systems integration. Will also evaluate regulatory inconsistencies created by varying program applications, application timelines, and reimbursement rates.
- **Child Care Licensing and Quality Coordination:** Responsible for identifying the various aspects of quality and program integrity requirements to be included in the transfer while maintaining child care licensing as the foundation of health and safety in all child care settings and integrate licensing with quality improvement efforts in Quality Counts. Will ensure that providers continue to have access to quality initiatives and provide an opportunity to evaluate and integrate current efforts with initiatives regarding trauma informed care and equity across all populations and geographies.

The work plan also includes significant stakeholder engagement activities, as outlined in the next section of this report. In addition to supporting the successful transfer of programs, this stakeholder engagement will inform the development and implementation of the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care by assisting in identification and assessment of potential changes to current laws, regulations, guidance, contracting, or eligibility structures that can work from the ground up and empower supported parents and child care providers to develop children who can seize opportunities in school, career, and life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the children and families we serve, providers and the early learning and care system as a whole. These adversities will continue to be addressed throughout the transition planning in order to ensure that we are able to mitigate and respond appropriately. The CDSS is continuing to meet weekly with the California Health and Human Services Agency and CDE to discuss guidance to the field and ensure that supports for child care providers and families are consistent, coordinated and informed by critical stakeholders.

As part of the transfer of child care programs to CDSS and the new Child Care and Development Division, CDSS is in the recruitment process for the Deputy Director position. The CDSS anticipates that the candidate selection process and hiring will be complete within the second quarter of the transfer.

Additionally, CDSS is exploring Public-Private Partnerships to support and inform critical aspects of the transfer.

Stakeholder Engagement

Overview

The CDSS has developed a comprehensive plan to engage with stakeholders. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to, parents, child care providers, child care provider unions, counties, alternative payment programs, resource and referral programs, food and nutrition program and advocates, child care and welfare advocates, child welfare, county offices of education, the TK—12 system, community colleges, Head Start, tribal programs, CDE, California Department of Developmental Services, State Preschool, First 5, legislative staff, and other impacted state departments. The Department has already launched a focused webpage, a survey and stakeholder comment forms, as well as a quarterly interactive webinar series. Meetings of the ECPC and transfer-related listening sessions are additional forums for stakeholder engagement.

The CDSS and CDE are committed to ensuring that community stakeholders are adequately supported to participate. Building upon successful client engagement strategies recently employed in other programs, this includes supporting parents through:

- Facilitating opportunities for full engagement in workgroups and stakeholder meetings. This requires identifying tools and resources needed to support parents' ability to engage in the process and make the engagement process accessible by removing barriers to participation (e.g., reimbursements or stipends, child care, meals, and travel expenses, etc.).
- Considerations and discussion around barriers to access and equitable outcomes that are unique to certain groups of people, including, for example, children with disabilities or immigrant children and their families.
- Engagement through various venues and in collaboration with trusted partners that allow parents and families to share their experience and thoughts outside of the space otherwise allocated to parents in larger meetings and workgroups.
- Supporting language access, utilizing culturally relevant approaches, and accommodating potential limitations to full participation during the pandemic.
- Integration and true input into the process through transparency in decision making.

Quarterly Stakeholder Webinars

The first quarterly webinar occurred on July 24, 2020. This webinar offered stakeholders the opportunity to engage with CDSS leadership regarding key progress and transition activities. Families and stakeholders had the ability to engage during these webinars through interactive tools, such as Poll Everywhere. The next quarterly webinar will occur on October 29, 2020 and will include translation services and the integration of

accessibility resources. These webinars will provide updates on the transfer of programs, key policy areas of focus, and opportunities for improvements.

Early Childhood Policy Council

The ECPC workgroups are critical forums for sharing updates and gathering information to ensure that the State progresses on its goals of improving outcomes for children and families. The team will coordinate with the ECPC to help inform the transfer related to issues such as:

- Racial, economic, and geographic access equity
- Positive family and child outcomes
- Positive outcomes for providers and contractors
- Alignment of the licensing and quality continuums
- Whole child and whole family approaches to service access

Topical Listening Sessions

In addition to the ECPC ad-hoc workgroups, CDSS is hosting topical stakeholder listening sessions. These stakeholder listening sessions are intended to inform the ECPC ad-hoc workgroup discussions and planning and CDSS. While the topics for these listening sessions will evolve based on stakeholder input and concerns, initial plans include sessions focused on: 1) contracting; 2) issues pertaining to rural areas; 3) tribal populations; 4) the streamlining of CalWORKs child care currently provided through Stages 1, 2, and 3; and 5) the alignment of regulations and guidance across child care and early learning programs. Subsequent sessions may include additional focus on equity-related issues, child care program payment rates, the continuum of child care licensing and quality programs, and the alignment of state-subsidized child care programs with State Preschool, TK—12, Head Start, and tribal programs, as well as state and local coordination and guidance processes.

To ensure that staff from CDE and CDSS who will be transferring to the new Child Care and Development Division are engaged and participate in the transition process, CDSS is hosting monthly meetings to provide updates on the transfer, gather feedback and considerations, and respond to questions and concerns. In the first quarter of the transition, the monthly meetings were held on August 27 and September 28, 2020.

The CDSS Director and Executive Leadership team met with First 5 and CDE quality teams to discuss Quality Counts California (QCC) and other quality initiatives being developed in partnership.

The CDSS Director spoke about the transfer with hundreds of stakeholders on July 23, 2020, at the Child Care & End Child Poverty virtual event, co-hosted by End Child Poverty CA, California Alternative Payment Program Association (CAPPA), Head Start

California, and the California Association of Food Banks, with about 40 other community organizations.

The CDSS Director also participated in the First 5 Executive Directors' meeting on August 27, 2020, and with the California Child Care Coordinator's Association (CCCCA), representing the Local Planning Councils, on September 25, 2020, to discuss the goals and opportunities to collaborate on the transfer.

The CDSS and CDE leadership also regularly meets with child care provider collective bargaining organizations and associations. These meetings are to ensure coordination and communication among agencies and organizations both as part of the transfer and to discuss programmatic and structural issues within the child care system that need to be addressed and resolved.

The CDSS Director and Executive Leadership team participated in a listening session focused on the intersections of families experiencing domestic violence and child care. The CDSS shared current policies and flexibilities in place to allow for expedited eligibility process and waivers of program requirements available to impacted families.

Next Steps and Significant Items for Next Quarter

The Early Childhood Development Act of 2020 enacted the State's plan to transfer a number of child care programs from CDE to CDSS. This transfer is intended to support implementation of a high-quality, affordable, early childhood care and learning system designed to comprehensively and effectively serve children and families. During this first quarter since enactment of the Act, CDSS and CDE have begun collaborative work and stakeholder engagement to ensure a smooth transfer.

The Departments will engage in additional operational work and stakeholder engagements during the next quarter.

- The ECPC presentation of the quarterly report and stakeholder engagement opportunities within the last quarter of 2020
- Quarterly Stakeholder Webinar scheduled for October 29, 2020
- Monthly forums for staff transferring to the new Child Care and Development Division
- Topical Listening Session on contracting challenges and best practices scheduled for October 2, 2020
- Workgroup Meetings related to implementing the work plan
- Deputy Director Recruitment
- Master Plan will be released no later than December 1, 2020
- The next quarterly report regarding that work will be completed and submitted to the Legislature by January 1, 2021