

# Local Policy

For

The Child Care Subsidy Program

At

Wake County Human Services

Updated: September 24, 2009

Revised: 9/12/06

# Subsidized Child Care Services Manual

## Local Policy (Wake County)

### I. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The Local Purchasing Agency will notify parents and providers of local policy by posting a copy at the reception desk and on Wake County's website.

### II. FUNDING FOR SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE (SCC)

LOCAL Our special needs set-aside is a minimum of \$171,134. Spending is monitored on a monthly basis. Special needs children are put on a separate waiting list, once the set-aside has been spent if there is a waiting list for other children.

### III. ESTABLISHING NEED AND A PLAN OF CARE

#### LOCAL POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

The LPA (Wake County) may authorize childcare services for up to 24 months for post-secondary education that is provided by an accredited institution. The parent/responsible adult must provide proof of enrollment from an accredited educational program (i.e. class schedule or school letter). Wake County will determine childcare hours based on class hours, study time and travel time. Students will be **granted 1 hour of study time per credit hour**. Students must maintain an overall grade point average of 2.0. Students will be required to provide proof of satisfactory progress at the end of each semester (i.e. official transcript, grade report or school letter).

## LOCAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

**DEFINITION** – VOCATIONAL TRAINING is training in a skill or trade to be pursued as a career.

Acceptable training includes but is not limited to: Center for Employment and Training (CET), Raleigh Vocational Center (RVC), Fisherman's Project, Thomas Health Care, etc.

## LOCAL GED STUDENTS

Wake County will provide child care assistance to students who are actively pursuing the completion of their GED. Students are expected to attend classes a minimum of 20 hours per week, if unemployed. Students who are employed are expected to attend classes a minimum of 6 hours per week. Students are required to provide proof of their attendance and proof of their progress towards completing their GED (i.e. letter or attendance record from their instructor). Half of needed credits should be completed within 12 months and continued support will be contingent on participants' progress.

**Note:** Extensions may be granted based on extenuating circumstances.

## LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Wake County requires all high school students to attend school on a regular basis. Students must provide class schedules and report cards each semester/quarter. Students are expected to meet the requirements for graduation. If a high school student plans to enroll in college, the student has 30 days to provide proof of enrollment to avoid being referred to the waiting list.

**Note:** Extensions may be granted based on extenuating circumstances.

## LOCAL GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

**DEFINITION – GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT** is employment in which a person is paid at a rate comparable to or above minimum wage.

For any parent who does not earn a set rate of pay of at least the State minimum wage, the following method will be used to determine if they are gainfully employed.

1. All wages, incomes, tips, etc, associated with the job will be added together and divided by the number of hours of work to determine an hourly wage.

If a parent is self-employed, business expenses will be subtracted from income (per Child Care Subsidy Manual Policy) to determine profit received. The profit will be divided by the number of hours worked to obtain the equivalent hourly wage.

If it is determined that a person is not gainfully employed, they will receive a time period of up to three (3) months from the date of application, to raise their hourly wage to at least the Federal minimum wage level.

The amount of time allowed to obtain at least the Federal minimum wage is based on the type of employment in which the person is engaged:

- Persons employed by a business/company at a rate of pay below minimum wage, but who earn tips/bonuses/commissions would be expected to earn the equivalent of the Federal minimum wage or above within one to two months of beginning employment (depending upon the amount of time needed to train for this position).
- Persons who are self-employed and just starting a business may need more time to establish clientele and will be allowed up to 3 months to establish themselves as being gainfully employed. Progress in increasing the hourly wage will be expected during this 3-month period in order to continue to receive Child Care Subsidy. Anyone who is not demonstrating progress towards obtaining at least minimum wage will not be allowed the full 3-month period.
- On call jobs are not gainfully employed such as sub teachers, PRN's.

The Child Care Case Manager will conduct quarterly reviews on these cases. Parents will be notified whether or not they are gainfully employed, as well as the period of time they have left to obtain gainful employment.

Employment for a minimum average of 30 hours per week (either alone or in combination with a job training or educational program) in any legally operating place of business from which the parent receives wages, salaries, commissions and tips equal to, or greater than, the federal minimum wage.

**For example:**

If a client earns \$225.00 a week, divide that figure by \$7.25 (min. wage), which would equal to 31.03 hours per week.

$$\$225.00 / \$7.25 = 31.03 \text{ hours}$$

## LOCAL SELF EMPLOYMENT

**DEFINITION – SELF EMPLOYMENT** – an individual is self-employed when a person is working in his or her own business, trade or profession rather than working for an employer.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

**STATE** -An individual is self-employed when he/she is working in his/her own business, trade or profession rather than working for an employer. A self-employed person generally exercises control over how the business will be conducted, not just the end product. A self-employed individual usually incurs operational expenses related to conducting his/her business or work activity.

**LOCAL-** Please note the following should be provided by the self-employed individual:

- Name and Location of Business
- Type of Business
- Number of Years in Operation
- Tax ID/Copy of License to Operate
- Income Tax forms (quarterly/yearly)
- Business Cards (optional)
- Initially submit a written record of their hours worked.

## **LOCAL CHANGING JOBS**

Wake County may limit the number of times that a client can change jobs and receive assistance to no more than **2 times** within a 12-month period, without good cause.

Good cause includes:

- 1.) Income advancement
  - 2.) Employee layoff
  - 3.) Death or severe illness of client or immediate family member
- Note: or other extenuating circumstances

Child care services can be terminated for no more than 90 (ninety) days for changing jobs without good cause. At point of new eligibility for service client is placed on a waiting list, if requested, until such time as funding is available.

## IV. FEES

### LOCAL PARENT FEES

- Families who are income eligible for child care assistance are required to pay a portion of the cost of child care through a parent fee. Parent fees are effective the month following approval. It is the provider's responsibility to collect the fee from the parent. The provider must give the parent a clear explanation of the fee payment arrangement and the consequences for non-payment. The provider must give the parent receipts as parent fees are paid.
- The childcare provider has the option to terminate the child care arrangement if the subsidy client does not pay his or her parent fee by notifying the agency of the unpaid amount within **30 days** and by requesting termination of services. If this procedure is followed a new voucher will not be issued to another provider until the parent fee is paid or a payment arrangement has been made between the provider and the parent. Wake County will not consider registration fees, late fees, educational fees, over the market rate fees or activity fees as part of the parent's balance. If the parent fails to honor the payment agreement with the previous childcare provider, childcare with the current provider will be terminated.
- The client is responsible for parent fees. The provider should collect the fee on a monthly basis. If the provider allows the fees to go unpaid for more than one month (30 days), Wake County will not honor the provider's request to terminate care for future service due to unpaid parent fees. Parent's must provide verification that one month of fees owed have been paid.

### LOCAL

#### REGISTRATION FEES

Effective July 1, 2006, Wake County Child Care Subsidy Program will no longer pay for registration fees except for Child Protective Services Cases.

## VOUCHER PROCEDURES

LOCAL Wake County designates all Child Care Case Managers, Team Leaders, Program Managers, and approved temporary child care staff to sign and initial vouchers. Child Care Case Managers can make corrections on a voucher and initial it. Updated copies will be sent to the appropriate party.

Vouchers must be completed and returned no later than 30 calendar days from the date of issuance.

Vouchers will be issued after the provider is selected. Vouchers must be completed and returned no later than 30 calendar days from the date of issuance.

If voucher is returned more than 10 working days beyond the voucher's due date, it must be voided and a new voucher must be issued before payment can be authorized. The new voucher will show the same eligibility period as the original voucher, but will have a new due date.

## VI. PARENTAL CHOICE

LOCAL Wake County may limit the number of times that a client may change child care providers while receiving child care assistance to no more **than one** provider during a 12-month period, without good cause. Parents should be educated initially about choosing quality child care and the importance of consistency. Failure to visit a provider may delay issuance of a voucher.

Good Cause includes:

1. Situations in which a child is terminated by the provider
2. Situations that pose a threat to the safety of the child
3. Extenuating circumstance which make the child care plan not feasible.

## V. REAPPLICATION PROCESS

LOCAL When there is a waiting list, clients will not be able to reapply for services once their case has been terminated but will be referred to the waiting list at their request.

Exceptions will be given under extreme extenuating circumstances:

- Illness immediate family member
- Death of immediate family member
- Agency Error

## IX. WAITING LIST

Wake County will maintain a waiting list when there is the possibility of limited funding. Families are served according to the Prioritization List and a % of funding will be applied to each need category until such time as the % of funding is spent and then all families will be added to the waiting list regardless of need category. In the event that funding is reduced during the fiscal year each need category will be cut according to the percentage of funding cut.

The LPA reviews and updates the waiting list at a minimum every six months. The LPA will notify clients by letter requesting that they update information and return it to the LPA within two weeks.

Within 30 days of receiving funding, the LPA will contact the parents in writing, to apply for services.

**\*\*Please note:** The waiting list is in chronological order by need category and application date. The LPA maintains separate waiting list for expectant mother, and special needs/developmental needs.

## Prioritization List for Child Care Financial Services By Need Category

### Child Protective Services:

- Child/ren receiving child protective services and in need of child care in order to remain in their own home and have a written referral from WCHS Child Protection Services Department justifying child care as part of the Family Services Agreement are given priority. Child care must be necessary to alleviate risk factors;

### Employment:

- Child/ren in the custody of WCHS who reside in a licensed foster home where all adults are employed an average of thirty (30) hours per week;
- Child/ren placed by WCHS in a non-licensed home where all adult/s are employed an average of thirty (30) hours per week and continue to receive services from WCHS
- Parent participating in at least 30 hours per week of Work First Employment services activity, justifying need for child care as part of the parent's Mutual Responsibility Agreement (cash assistance clients only)
- Parent receiving Work First Cash Assistance payments and are employed on average thirty (30) hours per week
- Military families deployed and serving in combat zone;
- Responsible adult/s in family gainfully employed an average of thirty (30) hours per week;
- Responsible adult/s in family employed at least twenty (20) hours per week and in post secondary school at least ten (10) hours per week;

### Education:

- Teen parents enrolled and working towards graduation from WCPSS or its equivalent
- Parent/Responsible Adult enrolled in post secondary education, skills training program or GED program;

### Special Needs:

- Child/ren whose social, emotional, physical or cognitive development is delayed or at risk of delay and whose family is income eligible;

### Child Welfare Services:

- Child Welfare Services without referral from WCHS Child Protective Services, ex. domestic violence ;

Expanded Seeking Employment (temporary policy) as funding permits

Please note: As long as there is a waiting list for child care services in Wake County we will not pay for services for children residing outside of Wake County unless the LPA can verify and document safety concerns for the children or responsible adult.

Signature Page

William C. Manfredi

Wake County Human Services Board Chairman

9/24/09

Date

[Signature]

Wake County Human Services Director

09-24-09

Date

Penny Becker

Child Care Subsidy State Consultant

10/5/09

Date

Gloria F. Cook

Child Care Subsidy Program Manager

10/5/09

Date