



Office of Children and Family Services

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Governor

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Sheila J. Poole
Acting Commissioner

Local Commissioners Memorandum

Transmittal:	16-OCFS-LCM-17
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Care Services
Date:	August 3, 2016
Subject:	Application for Child Care Assistance
Contact Person(s):	Joe Ziegler, OCFS Division of Child Care Services, 518-402-6520 Joe.Ziegler@ocfs.ny.gov
Attachments:	A: <i>Application for Child Care Assistance</i> (OCFS-6025) B: <i>How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance</i> (OCFS-6026) C: <i>NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form</i> (NVRA-05) All attachments can be accessed at: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/documents/docsChildCare.asp (Internet) http://ocfs.state.nyenet/admin/forms/BECS/ (Intranet – [limited access]) Note: To access Attachment C, <i>NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form</i> (NVRA-05), open OCFS-6025. NVRA-05 is included with OCFS-6025. Attachments A, B, and C are also posted below this policy on the OCFS websites for policies, at: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/ (Internet) http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/ (Intranet)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to inform local departments of social services (LDSSs) of the issuance of the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) for families applying only for child care assistance¹ and the instructions, *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026). This LCM also provides guidance regarding new federal eligibility and reporting requirements; and LDSSs' responsibilities regarding the *NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form* (NVRA-05).

¹The term 'applying only for child care assistance' means that the family is applying solely for child care assistance either when funds are available, or when funds are available and the LDSS has included the category of family in its Child and Family Services Plan. Families 'applying only for child care assistance' are not applying for guaranteed child care, nor are they applying for any other benefits, such as Public Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps), Home Energy Assistance, Medicaid, or other services.

II. Background

In 03-OCFS-INF-07, LDSSs were given the option of using a local equivalent to the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921) for families applying only for child care assistance and were provided with a model application form as a resource. This LCM replaces the previous guidance, 03-OCFS-INF-07. To comply with increased federal reporting requirements, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has developed an application form that LDSSs may use as an equivalent to the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921) for families applying only for child care assistance. The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) may also serve as a model for LDSSs that choose to develop their own local equivalent to the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921).

The federal *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014* (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) requires new case-level data elements to be reported by the state for child care services funded under the New York State Child Care Block Grant (NYSCCBG). The new elements to be reported on the federal Administration for Children and Families form ACF-801, *Child Care Quarterly Case Record*, are family homeless status, family military status, child disability status, and primary language spoken in the household. The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) includes questions that will capture these new ACF-801 data elements. Additionally, the federal statute provides for a new eligibility requirement that the family's assets do not exceed one million dollars, as certified by a member of the family. This certification is included on the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025).

OCFS and LDSSs are designated as participating agencies under Title 2, Article 5, section 211 of New York State Election Law to administer the distribution of voter registration forms to families applying or receiving assistance or services. The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) includes the *NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form* (NVRA-05).

III. Program Implications

Effective October 1, 2016, LDSSs must stop distributing, electronically, by mail, or in person, any previously approved local equivalent applications for child care assistance to parents applying for child care assistance only. After December 31, 2016, when determining initial eligibility or when re-determining eligibility for child care assistance, LDSSs may only accept:

- the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921), or
- the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025), or
- a local equivalent to the OCFS-6025 that has been approved by OCFS.

LDSSs may make the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) and the instructions, *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026), included as Attachments A and B of this LCM, available to parents applying for child care assistance only. The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) has a blank field on page four where LDSSs may enter the LDSS's address and other contact information to assist parents completing the application. If the LDSS adds its contact information on page four and makes *no other changes to the form*, then the OCFS form number at the top left corner of each page should remain on the form. LDSSs must inform the OCFS, Division of Child Care Services (DCCS), if they make the *Application for Child Care*

Assistance (OCFS-6025) and *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026) available to parents applying for child care assistance.

If the LDSS wishes to use a local equivalent of the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) and *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026), such forms must be approved by the OCFS DCCS prior to their use by the LDSS. Any local equivalent application for child care assistance that was approved by OCFS prior to the issuance of this LCM must be revised and resubmitted to DCCS for approval prior to their continued use by the LDSS.

The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) includes questions designed to capture the new data elements required by the federal Administration for Children and Families: family homeless status, family military status, child disability status, and primary language spoken in the household. If an LDSS chooses to use the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921) for families applying for child care assistance, the LDSS is still responsible for collecting this new information for federal reporting until such time as the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921) is revised. LDSSs must report on the new data fields on form ACF-801, *Child Care Quarterly Case Record*, for cases that are selected as part of the federal reporting sample.

The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) includes an attestation that the family resources do not exceed one million dollars. This must be signed by the parent(s) to satisfy federal requirements.

Local equivalent child care applications will not be approvable if they do not include the new data fields required by the federal Administration for Children and Families: family homeless status, family military status, child disability status, and primary language spoken in the household, as well as the certification that family resources do not exceed one million dollars.

Designated as participating agencies under Title 2, Article 5, section 211 of New York State Election Law, LDSSs must:

- Provide a *NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form* (NVRA-05) to applicants and recipients at the time of initial application, at recertification, and upon notification of a change of address. The *NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form* (NVRA-05) is included as the final two pages of the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025).
- Inform applicants and recipients that completion of the *NYS Agency-Based Voter Registration Form* (NVRA-05) is not required as part of their applications for child care assistance and will have no impact on their eligibility for child care assistance. The final section of *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026) includes this information.

For more information concerning actions required as a designated participating agency, LDSSs can refer to 95-ADM-01 issued by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

LDSSs must inform applicants that by completing the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) or the approved local equivalent child care application instead of the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921), they are only applying for the categories of child care assistance when funds are available (Categories 2 and 3) and they are not applying for guaranteed child care assistance (Category 1). LDSSs that use the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) or an approved local equivalent child care application must inform applicants that if the applicant wants to be considered for

eligibility for additional assistance or services, including guaranteed child care assistance, the applicant must complete the *Statewide Common Application* (LDSS-2921).

Additionally, LDSSs must continue to inform all applicants of their rights and responsibilities by providing:

- LDSS-4148A: *What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities*
- LDSS-4148B: *What You Should Know About Social Services Programs*
- LDSS-4148C: *What You Should Know If You Have an Emergency.*

IV. Access to the Child Care Application

The *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) and *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026) are available in English on the OCFS intranet and internet websites at <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/admin/Forms/> and <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/documents/docsChildCare.asp>. These forms will be made available in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Italian on the OCFS intranet and internet websites.

Hard copies of the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025), and *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026) in English will be available within 30 days from the release of this LCM, and the Spanish version will be available soon after.

To order hard copies of the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) and *How to Complete the Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6026), in English and Spanish, complete the [Request for Forms and Publications \(OCFS-4627\)](#) and mail your request to:

OCFS Forms and Publications Unit
52 Washington Street, Room 134 North Bldg.
Rensselaer, NY 12144-2834

OR

Call the Forms Hotline: 518-473-0971

V. Effective Date

Effective October 1, 2016, LDSSs may no longer distribute, electronically, by mail, or in person, previously approved local equivalent applications for child care assistance to parents applying for child care assistance only. LDSSs may replace their local equivalent form with the *Application for Child Care Assistance* (OCFS-6025) or with a revised and approved local equivalent child care application. However, LDSSs must accept a previously approved local equivalent application for child care assistance if submitted by an applicant during the period October 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016.

/s/ Janice M. Molnar, Ph.D.

Issued by:

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Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services