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ODJFS Receives Perfect Score on Federal Inspector General's Audit

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General recently completed an audit of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and found that, within the scope of its audit, the agency fully complied with all federal requirements for Child Care and Development Fund discretionary funding expenditures between federal fiscal years 2007 and 2009. As a result, the Inspector General issued no recommendations.

“This audit confirms that Ohio’s publicly funded child care program is administered effectively and that taxpayer dollars are spent appropriately,” said ODJFS Director Michael B. Colbert. “I want to thank our child care staff and our county partners for their hard work and their commitment to low-income children and families.”

The Child Care and Development Fund, together with several other sources of state and federal money, is used to reimburse the nearly 10,000 child care providers who care for children in Ohio’s publicly funded child care program.

Publicly funded child care allows low-income parents to find and keep jobs while ensuring that their children still have access to the early care and education programs they need to succeed in school. Ohio’s approximately \$700 million child care program serves more than 100,000 children each year.

In the last two years, ODJFS has introduced a new electronic time and attendance system for children in the program and created a new unit to monitor attendance and payment data. The agency also instituted new rules preventing children in the program from having more than one full-time child care provider and more than two total providers. These changes have reduced administrative costs, improved accountability, and made it easier to monitor for fraud and abuse.

Ohio’s 88 county departments of job and family services determine families’ eligibility for publicly funded child care services. ODJFS then makes payments to providers for the cost of that care. To be eligible for publicly funded child care, a family’s income must not exceed 125 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). After that, families may remain eligible until their income exceeds 200 percent of the FPL.

