



Department of
Job and Family Services

Ted Strickland, Governor
Douglas E. Lumpkin, Director

December 11, 2009

Dear Child Care Provider:

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is pleased to announce that it is developing a new automated computer system that will greatly streamline and simplify the payment and eligibility process for all participants in the state's publicly funded child care (PFCC) program. This system will be implemented gradually, starting in April 2010. The following are some of the primary changes you will see:

- **A centralized payment system for all providers will begin statewide in April 2010.** The system will allow payments to be issued directly from ODJFS, instead of from the local County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS), for services provided beginning in April 2010. This means that providers will be required to sign agreements with ODJFS rather than contracts with the local CDJFS. In addition, ODJFS will issue payments to child care providers via direct deposit. Providers will still send child care invoices to the local CDJFS. CDJFS staff will calculate the payment amounts, as before, but now they will enter those amounts into the new system so that ODJFS can send the payment to providers electronically. In addition, detailed payment reports from the state will be made available so providers can track all payments made for each child.
- **A system for determining eligibility and creating authorizations for PFCC will begin rolling out to CDJFS in April 2010.** County staff will still accept applications, determine eligibility and create authorizations for PFCC. However, the new system will simplify these functions. It will also generate all the notices that need to be sent to families (approvals, denials, changes and terminations). Providers will receive copies of approval, changes, and terminations so they have immediate information about the families they are serving. This system will be rolled out gradually to all 88 counties.
- **A system to electronically track attendance and calculate payments will be activated in the fall of 2010.** A "Point of Service" device that is similar to a credit card machine will be installed at each provider location. The device will communicate with the new automated eligibility system and display a message about whether the child is eligible and authorized for care at that location. The time and attendance information will then be transmitted to the payment system so that weekly payments can be made to providers. When the time and attendance portion of the system is available, providers will no longer send invoices to the CDJFS, as this information will be automatically

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uploaded to the state system. More information will be provided explaining the new invoicing process and Point of Service devices when this part of the project rolls out.

- **A new Child Care Provider Portal will be developed for the Bureau of Child Care and Development's web site.** This will allow providers to electronically submit a variety of important information such as a provider agreement, banking information and provider rate information. For example, providers will be able to use this portal to submit banking information such as account and routing numbers. They will also be able to use it to report changes to their rates and fees, and to view and print detailed payment reports.

Child care providers who want to enter into a provider agreement with ODJFS to participate in or continue participating in the PFCC program will need to take a few simple steps prior to April 2010. ODJFS will send more specific information about this in January. In the meantime you may want to prepare by doing the following:

- Establish and maintain a valid bank account (This can be a checking or savings account.)
- Establish Internet access and a valid email address (If you do not have immediate Internet access contact your local library or local One Stop Agency for general public internet access.)
- Establish customary rates in the format of weekly full-time, weekly part-time, and hourly child care for each age range of children you are able to serve (infants, toddlers, preschool, and school children)

ODJFS believes there are many positive benefits these changes will have for providers, county agencies and Ohio's children and families. The new system will be implemented gradually, with as little disruption to providers as possible. As the system moves closer to implementation, additional information will be provided. If you have questions or comments, please email us at CCIDS_Help_Desk@jfs.ohio.gov. Thank you for your continued service to Ohio's children and families, and for joining us in this effort to improve both customer service and efficiency.

Sincerely,



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Office of Families and Children

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