

# Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center Operating Policies and Procedures For Subsidized Programs

The Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center operates various state and federally funded programs to enhance and subsidized the delivery of child care. Current subsidized programs include: California State Preschool Program, General Child Care, CCAMPIS, and the Child Care Food Program. The following policies are required for recipients of these programs.

## 1) **Admission Policy:**

- a) **General Child Care:** Families qualifying for assistance from the California Department of Education General Child Care grant must demonstrate both need and income eligibility according to the guidelines set forth by the state. Children served under the General Child Care grant will be enrolled in the following order of priority as space permits:
  - i) Children receiving care from Child Protective Services
  - ii) Income eligible – student parent
  - iii) Income eligible – other
- b) **California State Preschool Program:** Children may be enrolled in California State Preschool Program in the following order of priority:
  - i) Children receiving care from Child Protective Service
  - ii) Eligible 4 year old\* – student parent
  - iii) Eligible 4 year old – other
  - iv) Eligible 3 year old – student parent
  - v) Eligible 3 year old – other

(1) (\* Age of eligibility is defined as child who will be three or four on Dec.2 of the contract year.)
- c) **All Subsidized Programs:** After *A* and *B* above and within each category the applicants will be prioritized by income. Families with the lowest adjusted income shall be admitted first, or when warranted, the following priorities may be applied:
  - i) A child with exceptional needs who's IEP identifies State Preschool or Child Care as being an appropriate placement.
  - ii) Children from families whose special circumstances may diminish the child's opportunity for normal development.
- d) When two or more families have the same income the family that has been on the waiting list the longest shall be admitted first.
- e) All child care openings for children who are not eligible for subsidized child care will be filled in this order of priority:
  - i) Non-eligible student parents
  - ii) Non-eligible staff/faculty
  - iii) Non-eligible community
- f) Within each non-eligible category families will be admitted based on order the application was received.
- g) Non-eligible families will not be enrolled in such a way as to use a subsidized space unless the waiting list is exhausted and no eligible families apply.

## 2) **Admission Priorities – Procedures:**

- a) Office to maintain waiting list categories as outlined in policy.
- b) Office to contact applicants by phone in order of priority when vacancies occur. Two phone messages left on two separate days will suffice as notification of vacancy. If message is not returned within 24 hours the office will contact the next qualified applicant for placement. Documentation of attempts to contact applicant will be recorded on the application.
- c) Office may certify children up to 120 days prior to admission.
- d) All eligible children must be certified within 30 days of enrollment.
- e) Records will be maintained in the Center office that documents certification, enrollment, and admission according to the admission priority policy.
- f) Once all eligible children have been enrolled we may enroll children in State Preschool who exceed the age limitations, or whose family income exceed the income ceilings by 15% or less.
  - i) These children shall comprise a maximum of 10% of total enrollment.
  - ii) The office will maintain evidence that a diligent search was first made for eligible children
  - iii) The office will maintain family income information and the specific reason for enrolling children who would otherwise be ineligible.

## 3) **Certification of Eligibility Policies**

- a) Residence:
  - i) The child's parents must live and/or work in the State of California.
- b) Income:
  - i) A family is deemed eligible if the total countable gross income, adjusted for family size, is equal to or less than 75% of the state median income. Family size and income tables are made available each contract year for use in determining eligibility.
- c) Need:
  - i) Need shall be determined by employment hours, seeking employment, attending a training or education program leading to employment, homeless and seeking housing, incapacitation or child is receiving protective services through a local social service agency or emergency shelter.
- d) All families who meet the eligibility criteria for subsidized services who apply will be enrolled upon availability of space.
- e) The Children's Center maintains the authority to verify income through written documentation and/or direct contact with employer to verify gross pay and employment.
- f) Family Size shall be verified by documentation provided by the parent as requested by the Children's Center, such as prior income tax records and/or children's birth certificates.
- g) Income shall be verified by documentation provided by the parent as requested by the Children' Center, such as recent check stubs, tax records, TANF payments, contact with employer, etc.
- h) Income will not be adjusted due to voluntary or involuntary deductions.

- i) When basis of eligibility is the family's income the center will maintain documentation of all countable income.

**4) Certification of Eligibility Procedure:**

- a) **Residency:** The child's parents must live or work in California. Evidence of address, income verification or declaration to live or work in California is required.
- b) **Family Size and Income:** A family is deemed eligible if the total countable gross income, adjusted for family size, is equal to or less than 75% of the state median income. Family size and income tables are made available each contract year for use in determining eligibility. Documentation is to be kept in child's file.
  - i) Family size is determined by the number of adults and children related by blood, marriage, or adoption that live in the child's household.
  - ii) When necessary document family size by prior tax statements and/or review of children's birth certificates.
  - iii) When an adult living in the house is neither the parent nor spouse of the parent, the adult and the adult's children shall be excluded from family size when it benefits the family. (We may exclude grandparents, adult siblings, aunts/uncles, and boy/girlfriends.)
  - iv) We may exclude the income of adults not counted in family size.
- c) **Documentation of income may be in the form of:**
  - i) Check stubs from prior month that include date, gross pay, and pay period.
  - ii) If self-employed, parents may present a letter from the source of income, copies of tax returns, or statements of estimated income for tax purposes.
  - iii) Parents who do not have documentation may make a declaration of their income. However, the Center is not obligated to accept a declaration of income if we believe it to be false.
  - iv) Documentation of TANF or Cal Works payments.
  - v) Contact with the employer to verify gross pay and employment.
  - vi) Copy of court order to verify income from child support payments, or proof of payments.
  - vii) For a *Family of One*, count only the child's income.
  - viii) The office must maintain documentation of all countable income.
- d) **Countable income does NOT include:**
  - i) Verified child support payments to child who is receiving child development services.
  - ii) Business expenses for self-employed families.
  - iii) Allowances received for uniforms or work required clothing, food or shelter. A statement from the employer verifying that the allowance is work required must be on file in the child's file.
  - iv) State or Federal Grants or loans to students for educational purposes.
  - v) Loans, grants & scholarships obtained under conditions that preclude their use for current living costs.
  - vi) Earnings of a child under 18.
  - vii) All income of a SSI/SSP recipient. Do not exclude income of other household members

- e) **Need Eligibility** – (General Childcare eligibility is based on both need and income). Need may be established by documentation of one or more of the following:
  - i) Employment
  - ii) Training
  - iii) Parental incapacity
  - iv) Child’s special needs
  - v) Homelessness
  - vi) Seeking employment
  - vii) Seeking permanent housing
- f) **Child:** A child is deemed eligible if a valid child protective service referral is received (regardless of income). Check compliance review document for further verification information.
- g) **Family of One:**
  - i) A child living with adults other than the natural or adoptive parent shall be considered a family of one. The guardian’s income is not counted.
  - ii) Documentation of child placement from a public or private agency, or court order shall be kept in the child’s file.
  - iii) If placement is directly from the parent, request a notarized statement from the parent.
- h) **State Preschool - Length of Eligibility:** Once a family or child is deemed eligible they remain eligible for the full contract year, regardless of income changes. Recertification is not required except at the annual application period.
- i) **General Childcare – Length of Eligibility:** The application shall be updated within 30 days whenever there is a change in family size, income, public assistance status or need.

**5) Attendance Policy:**

- a) Attendance is required for the agreed-upon child schedule unless there is an excused absence. Absences shall be excused for family emergencies and for circumstances that are in the best interest of the child as defined below:
  - i) **Illness:** Children may be excused for illness when parents notify the Center that their child is ill and specify the type of illness. A doctor’s note may be required for excessive absence due to illness or for absence beyond three days.
  - ii) **Family Emergency:**
    - (1) Death of close family member.
    - (2) Family crisis (divorce, child or spousal abuse, loss of home)
  - iii) **Best Interest of the Child:**
    - (1) Time spent with parent for special event
    - (2) Court Ordered visitations with parent
  - iv) **Annual absence limit:** Absences for family emergency and/or best interest of the child are limited to a total of 10 days per contract year. There is no limit to excused absences due to illness.
- b) **Unexcused Absence limit:**
  - i) The Center shall allow up to 2 unexcused absences per quarter for a maximum of 8 unexcused absences per contract year. Unexcused absences in excess of two per quarter will be grounds for termination from the subsidized program. Termination

of subsidized services may also result in termination of enrollment in the Children's Center if no *non-subsidized* openings are available.

- ii) If there is a non-funded opening available the terminated subsidized parent may opt to stay at the Children's Center and pay full fees for child care services.

**6) Attendance – Procedures**

**a) Excused Absence:**

- i) Verify reason for absence with parent; Have parent make note of reason and sign full signature on attendance sheet or if notified by phone of absence office personnel may make note of reason and sign attendance sheet.
- ii) If absence due to illness is longer than three days the office will request that the parent bring a note from the child's doctor before returning to school.
- iii) If absence is due to court-ordered visitation, acquire a copy of court order to keep in child's file.
- iv) Office to maintain record of excused absence for emergency or best interest and notify parent when 10 days have been used.

**b) Unexcused Absences:**

- i) Policy shall be available to parents in the parent handbook.
- ii) Office will give parent written copy of this policy at time of first unexcused absence. A dated copy of the notice will be placed in the child's file.
- iii) At time of notification of exceeding the unexcused absence limit, the parent will be given a Notice of Action and informed of the termination of their grant contract services. The parent may be given the option of staying in the program and paying fees if a non-state funded opening is available.

**7) Field Trip Policy:**

- a) The Center may charge for field trips to help cover the cost of the bus or the entrance fee under the following conditions:
  - i) Parents must be notified in advance that a fee may be charged.
  - ii) No child will be denied participation in the field trip because of a parent's inability or refusal to pay.
  - iii) The maximum field trip charges per year shall not exceed \$25.00.

**8) Field Trips – Procedures:**

- a) Notify Parents of trip details in writing.
- b) Collect payments in office. Keep records only to account for total collected. This record is to remain confidential. Do not identify children who's parents have paid or not paid.
- c) Maximum field trip charges per child per year shall not exceed \$25.00. File of field trips and charges per class per year shall suffice as record of total charges.
- d) Expenses incurred and income received for field trips must be reported to the CDE, Educ. & Finance Division. Income shall specifically be reported as *restricted income*. The Center will maintain a file for each trip documenting cost of the field trip as well as income received from parent charges.

**9) Late Fee Policies:**

- a) The Center shall charge a per-minute late fee after closing
- b) Parents shall be notified of the fee in the parent handbook and in the enrollment contract.
- c) The Center shall charge for any time that the child is in attendance in excess of the contracted hours. Charges for overtime will be the standard published charge for the additional time-block that the child attended.
- d) Billing for both of these conditions will be immediate with payment due upon receipt of the bill.
- e) Repeated late pick-up (more than three times after closing per quarter) may result in the termination of the child's contract and enrollment.

**10) Late Fees – Procedures:**

- a) Late fees are to be added to the parent's bill immediately following the incident. Late fees are documented by time on the sign-out sheet. The closing teacher may document the time signed-out and initial.

**11) Fifth-Year Program Policies:**

- a) Children who are developmentally ready for an enhanced educational program, either in preparation for kindergarten or first grade, may be admitted to the fifth year class. Children in the fifth year program must be five years of age prior to December 1.
- b) A birth certificate is required with the application.
- c) Attendance five full days per week is required for enrollment in the fifth year class.
- d) Income-eligible parents who do not demonstrate need for five days of child care per week, and who request enrollment in our fifth year class, will be charged a daily rate for those school days where no need has been established.

**12) Individual Program Enrollment Policy:**

- a) Children shall be admitted to one of four programs:
  - i) Infant/toddler
  - ii) Preschool
  - iii) Fifth year
  - iv) School-age
- b) Admission to each program is separate and distinct. Every effort will be made to allow children to move seamlessly from one program to the next, based on availability of space. However, if no space is available and the child has out-grown their current program they must leave the program until another opening becomes available.

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