



STATE OF GEORGIA
Division of Family and Children Services

Nathan Deal
Governor

Bobby D. Cagle
Director

July 17, 2017

Child Welfare Services County Letter No. 2017- 02

To: County Departments of Family and Children Services
Regional Directors
District Directors
State Office Staff

From: Bobby D. Cagle, Director
Georgia Division of Family and Children Services

Re: Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program transition to the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)

Purpose

The purpose of this Child Welfare Services County Letter (CWSCL) is to announce policy changes resulting from the transfer of the CAPS program to the DECAL.

Discussion

In an effort to build a unified comprehensive early education system, the CAPS program is being transferred to DECAL. The transition will be implemented in phases with the final phase occurring in 2018. Effective July 17, 2017, 13 counties (Bibb, Brooks, Catoosa, Clarke, Colquitt, Cook, Douglas, Echols, Gilmer, Gordon, Lowndes, Murray and Whitfield) will utilize the new referral process for CAPS, Early Head Start, Head Start and Pre-K. This includes children from other counties that are placed in the impacted counties.

Below is the new childcare referral process flow for regular childcare, Early Head Start, Head Start or Pre-K services:

1. Submit the Child Welfare Child Care Services and Early Education Form via email to CAPSReferrals@dec.al.ga.gov within one business day of discovering the need for childcare or early education services:
 - a. Write "Child Welfare Referral" in the subject line of the email for initial referrals.
 - b. Include the Georgia SHINES Case ID number.
NOTE: This will provide the CAPS Family Support Manager a consistent frame of reference should the SSCM change.
 - c. Attach all applicable items required for the referral:
 - i. Provider Rate Sheet (CAPS Form 61);
 - ii. Proof of citizenship;
 - iii. CAPS Family Asset Certification (CAPS Form 602);
 - iv. Proof of Activity (CPS Cases); and

- v. Pre-K Referral (if applicable).
2. Submit a new Child Welfare Child Care Services and Early Education Form as indicated below:
 - a. Within one business day of a change in a child's placement or childcare provider.
 - b. Within five business days of any other changes involving the child or caregiver.
 - c. Write "Child Welfare Change" in the subject line of the email.
3. Direct inquiries related to Pre-K, Early Head Start and Head Start programs to the DFCS Early Childhood Collaboration Program Manager at early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov.

NOTE: Informal childcare providers must register with a CAPS Family Support Manager and be enrolled in the CAPS program in order to be eligible for CAPS reimbursement. The providers must re-enroll in CAPS annually.

Implementation

This policy change is effective upon release of this county letter and applies only to the aforementioned counties. The policy change becomes applicable to additional counties as they are phased into the new process. Child welfare policies 10.16 Foster Care: Child Care and Early Education and 18.7 Support Services to Preserve or Reunify Families: Childcare Services will be revised to incorporate the changes within this county letter when the CAPS transition to DECAL has occurred statewide.

The existing process outlined in child welfare policy 10.16 Foster Care: Childcare and Early Education and 18.7 Support Services to Preserve or Reunify Families: Childcare Services remains applicable for counties who have not transitioned into this new process.

Regional and County Leadership shall provide opportunities for staff to review and discuss this county letter to support implementation. Questions regarding the county letter shall be directed to the DFCS Early Childhood Collaboration Program Manager at early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov.