



## LARIMER COUNTY WORKS POLICY

<b>Title:</b>	Affordable, Appropriate Child Care		
<b>Effective Date:</b>	07/01/10	<b>Page: 1 of</b>	3
<b>Desk:</b>	WFC & BPD	<b>Revision:</b>	2
<b>Reference:</b>	LCWC P&P		
<b>Agency Letters:</b>	TCW 99-25-A		
<b>Regulations:</b>	3.622.2 D & 3.626.4 B, 1-3		

### **PURPOSE:**

To establish a policy with regard to the definitions of affordable and available child care and to inform both staff and the community of this policy.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Colorado Works participants are universally required to complete weekly activity hours based on their household composition. Participants who are unable to obtain child care may be eligible for a time limited Quality Assurance hold if they can demonstrate that one of the following circumstances prevents them from completing appropriate activities:

1. Child care within a reasonable distance from the home or the work site is unavailable;
2. Informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements is unavailable; or
3. Appropriate and affordable child care is not available.

The Colorado State Department of Human Services requires county departments of Human Services to establish criteria to address when childcare is defined as unavailable, which include:

1. How a parent will demonstrate the child care is unavailable;
2. Definitions of "appropriate child care," "reasonable distance," "unsuitability of informal care," and "affordable child care arrangements."

### **POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of this department to inform every Colorado Works participant at the point of initial intake and at on-going case management interviews of this policy and the steps needed to demonstrate his or her inability to obtain child care.

Participants who express difficulty with meeting the activities outlined in the Individual Responsibility Contract (IRC) due to child care issues will be allowed to negotiate a new IRC to facilitate his or her ability to meet the required activities. If a reasonable IRC cannot be negotiated that meets the needs of the participant and the department, a written request, along with documentation to support the claim, will be submitted by the employment coach to the Quality Control Committee (QAC) for review.

The QAC will determine if the participant meets Larimer County's criteria for being unable to obtain appropriate and affordable child care and approve or deny "good cause" for not participating in an activity and/or for not imposing a sanction against the Temporary Assistance Grant (TAG).

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Appropriate and affordable formal child care arrangements are defined as unavailable when the following conditions exist:

1. The vacancy rate for licensed centers and homes is less than 10% in Larimer County; or
2. The rate of licensed centers or licensed homes willing to accept CCAP rates falls below 50% of the total number of licensed centers and homes in Larimer County; or
3. The vacancy rate for licensed special needs providers is less than 5% in Larimer County.

Informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements are defined as unavailable or unsuitable when the following conditions exist:

1. There is no relative or other individual willing to care for the child; or
2. A willing and able relative or other individual is not willing, or able, to accept the CCAP rate; or
3. The only available relative or individual is unfit to care for a child as determined by an approved fingerprint-based criminal history records check along with a review of the State administered database for child abuse and neglect; or
4. The potential child care provider is an undocumented alien.

A reasonable distance from an individual's home or work site for which appropriate child care would be considered unavailable is defined as:

1. The distance between the child's home and the child care setting or the parent's place of employment and the child care setting that, when traveled using transportation resources available to the family, still allows the family to perform basic daily routines including meal preparation, personal care and grooming, and meet the need for basic sleep. Ages of children and time of day will be included in this evaluation for reasonable distance.