

Updates on Subsidy Eligibility Streamlining
April 8, 2013

The following items list the actions that DEL and DSHS have taken or in process of taking to improve customer service to Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) families. DEL establishes child care policy and works with DSHS to implement the WCCC program. DSHS establishes the eligibility of families authorizes and makes payments.

“Quick Wins” Actions	Status
1. Establish a common form	DSHS uses similar forms for all benefit programs including child care. The combined agency action plan team is working on having the forms “self-populate” for child care if the family is using another DSHS public benefit program like SNAP or TANF. Agency staff at DSHS and DEL are looking at the feasibility of using SNAP (food program) income eligibility to establish WCCC eligibility.
2. Cut “layers” out of process	DEL and DSHS are reviewing the child care worker manual to reduce any unnecessary steps to establish eligibility or authorize payment.
3. Use DEL created webinars for policy clarifications to DSHS staff	DEL is working on the first webinar to DSHS staff in the areas of determining: income, work and school schedules; authorizing units of care; and rules around school vacations. DEL provided a face to face training to DSHS child care workers March 14, and will provide two more trainings, May 22 in Spokane and May 23 in Yakima. DSHS is also providing training on those days.
4. Verify school schedule when family establishes eligibility	DSHS created a form with DEL approval which puts summer and school vacations in the family’s case record. That will allow DSHS to authorize more units of care based on the schedule, rather than requiring the parent request more care.

<p>5. Use only one type of income verification from a list of potential ways to verify income</p>	<p>DEL will work with DSHS to clarify income verification in a webinar format. It appears that some workers believe that they need multiple forms of income verification rather than just one type of verification.</p>
<p>6. Simplify the directions to DSHS to establish how much care a family should be authorized</p>	<p>DEL has worked out a simplified chart of how many units to authorize compared with a family's work/school schedule. DEL will work with DSHS to pilot this chart with staff to make sure that it makes sense. Once the pilot is completed, DEL will train DSHS staff via a webinar on this way of determining units of care.</p>
<p>7. Use 12 month eligibility without redeterminations mid-period unless the family goes over 200% federal poverty level.</p>	<p>DEL is developing a webinar about determining eligibility and will include 12 month eligibility in the webinar. DEL has heard from stakeholders that some workers re-determine eligibility every three or six months.</p>

Current enrollment in WCCC is over 27,000 households and 46,000 children. The caseload has been in an upward trend since the low enrollment of 22,000 households in June 2012. The enrollment cap is at 33,000.

DSHS is currently meeting or exceeding their metrics on their service response. Most applications are processed with 24 hours, and the forced disconnect rate is under 3%.