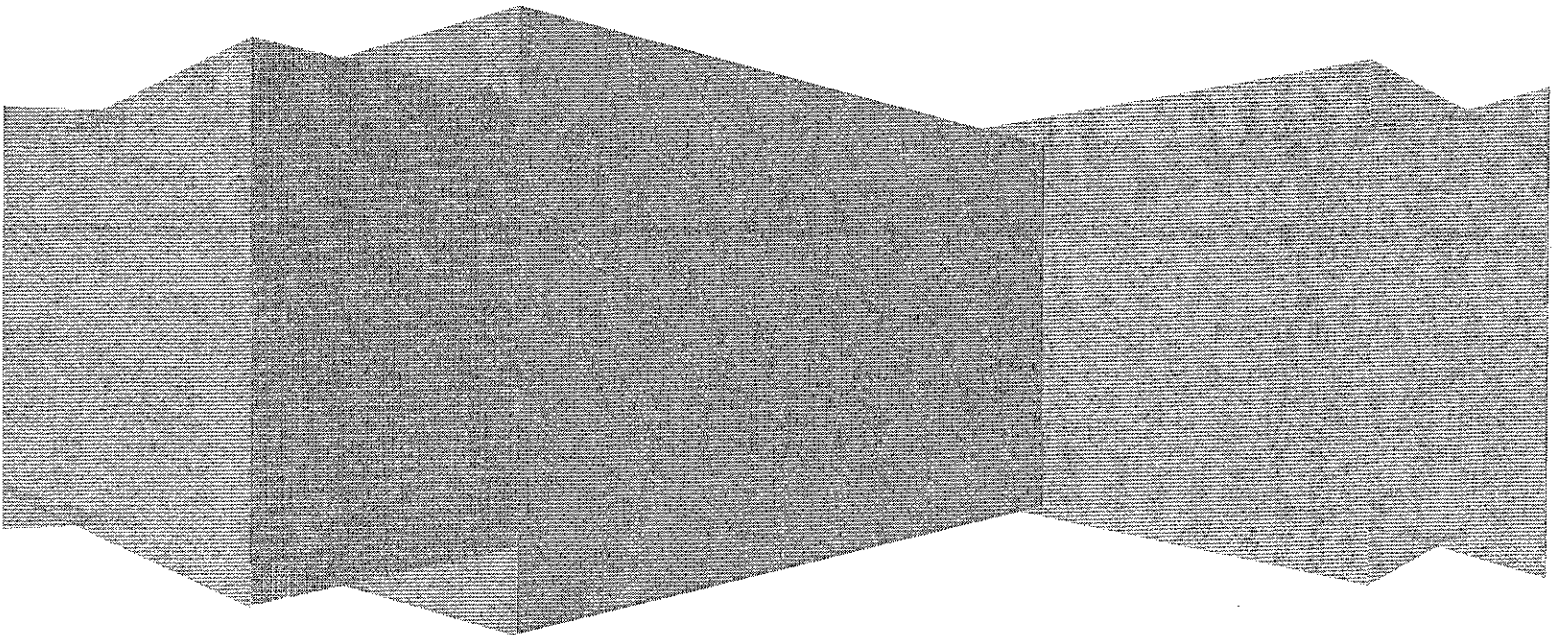


**FORT BELKNAP INDIAN COMMUNITY**

**FORT BELKNAP CHILD CARE PROGRAM  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK**

**ADOPTED: OCTOBER 1, 2018**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **I. Application & Intake process**

- A. Household income and family size
- B. Verification of Native American Descent
- C. Verification of Residency
- D. Verification of Work, School, Training or Job Search
  - 1. *Employment*
  - 2. *School/Training*
  - 3. *Job Search*
  - 4. *Self-Employment*
- E. Signed Release form
- F. Immunization
- G. Provider Statement
  - 1. Mandated reports
  - 2. Copy of Contract (Licensed Providers)
  - 3. Criminal Background checks (Unlicensed Providers)
  - 4. Disqualification Factors (Unlicensed Providers)
  - 5. Drug Screening
- H. Health and Safety Checklist
- I. Training

### **II. Eligibility - Application Approval**

- A. Child Care Needs Form
- B. Eligibility Certification Form
- C. Waiting List Status
- D. Approval Date for Service Year
- E. Notification
- F. Authorization

### **III. Waiting List**

### **IV. Approved Child Care Hours**

- A. Employment
- B. Job Search

### **V. Payment to Providers**

- A. Child Care Schedules
- B. Accounts Receivable/Payable Schedule
- C. Calendar

### **VI. Co-Payments**

- A. Parents Responsibility
- B. Provider Responsibility
- C. Late Co-payments

### **VII. Tax Questions**

### **VIII. Rights and Responsibilities**

## INTRODUCTION

The Fort Belknap Indian Community Child Care Program (FBICCCP) is designed to provide monetary help to eligible low-income families who are in need of child care assistance. It is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau.

The mission of the Fort Belknap Child Care Program is to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality child care services on or near the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation (within a 5-mile radius of the Fort Belknap reservation boundaries), which includes Blaine County (Harlem) and Phillips County (Dodson).

This handbook outlines the rules and regulations of the Fort Belknap Child Care Assistance Program. It will inform parents who receive child care assistance and the child care providers paid by the Fort Belknap Child Care Program on the program's policies, procedures and established guidelines that must be followed.

Any comments regarding the Policies & Procedures can be directed to the Child Care Program Manager at (406) 353-2827.

Fort Belknap Indian Community  
Fort Belknap Child Care Program  
Policies and Procedures  
Rules and Regulations Handbook

**I. Application and Intake Process to Determine Eligibility:**

To be eligible for child care assistance, parents must: (1) reside in the service area of the Fort Belknap Indian Community, which is on or within 5 miles of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation (to include Blaine and Phillips Counties); (2) be an enrolled member of the Gros Ventre or Assiniboine Tribe or third generation descendent of a federally recognized tribe; (3) Meet the income requirements based on the Basic Sliding Fee Scale; and (4) be actively involved in employment, school/training activities or Job Search activities.

**Application for Intake Process:**

Parents MUST call the Child Care Manager to initiate the intake process. Call to set up an appointment at: (406) 353-2827.

Parents must bring with them to the intake appointment the following;

- Completed Application with parent's signature;
- Completed employment verification form for both parents (if applicable);
- Information on previous six months of income (e.g., pay stubs, employer generated income printout sheets) for both parents, if applicable. This includes significant others who the applicant has a child with or a married spouse (even though they do not biologically have children together);
- Tribal enrollment verification form (if enrolled with another tribe, must have enrollment card and Tribe's enrollment office contact information), or tribal identification card;
- School/Training verification (class schedule);
- Verification of residency (i.e., copy of parent's and provider's current utility bill);
- Completed Consent to Release Information form from both parents (if applicable);
- Current immunization records for **each** child in home;
- Completed parent statement with original signature of parent; and
- Copy of child(ren)'s birth certificate.

**All forms listed above MUST be brought with parent(s) for the Intake Appointment with the Child Care Manager. Forms not completed for intake process could delay the application process to determine eligibility. Applications should be processed for eligibility determination within 14 working days. Incomplete applications are not placed on the waiting list until all required forms are turned in. IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPLY ALL COMPLETED FORMS.**

**A. Household income and family size**

The application must list all household members and their relationship to the applicant. The FBICCCP uses a Basic Sliding Fee Scale to determine eligibility based on family size and income.

New children added to the application after approval will NOT be automatically put on the program. Parents must update their existing application to include new children and those children will be put on the waiting list if no new funds are available.

Applicants who are married but separated must provide the FBICCCP with proof that their spouse is not living in the home by providing to FBICCCP a copy of the spouse's current utility bill showing a different residence. If applicant cannot prove spouse is out of the home, verification of employment is needed from both parents for the application to be considered. The FBICCCP will encourage cooperation from the applicant to comply with the Child Support Enforcement Program in an attempt to recover child support/alimony from the absent parent.

Applicants are required to provide the following sources of income for the last Six (6) month:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| *Employment      | *Social Security   |
| *Unemployment    | *Self-employment for all adult household members will be included as income (this includes significant others or non-biological step parents.) |
| *Farmer's Income |  |

A child or marriage between two adults is binding and defines that household as family.

**HOMELESS FAMILIES:**

The FBICCCP uses the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness as defined in section 725 of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a). The program has procedures to permit enrollment (after an initial eligibility determination) of children experiencing homelessness. FBICCCP will establish a grace period of 30 days to allow children experiencing homelessness and children in foster care to receive services under this part while providing families (including foster families) a reasonable time to take any necessary action to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements.

Teenage parents are not required to pay co-payment if attending school and/or work. Their school/work schedules and attendance will be verified.

**B. Verification of Native American Descent**

Applicant must complete a verification of Native American Descent Form. To be eligible, enrollment must be verified for either the child (for which child care assistance is requested), either parent or either grandparent. A birth certificate is requested to verify parentage. Information of parentage may be shared with the Local, Tribal, or County Child Support Agency working on behalf of the custodial parent. Applications must be filled out completely in order to begin the intake process.

If the child is the enrolled member, a copy of his/her tribal enrollment card may be provided in lieu of the verification of the Native American Descent Form. If the child, parent or grandparent is from another Federally Recognized Tribe, parent must provide Tribal Identification along with contact information for that Tribe's enrollment office.

**C. Verification of Residency**

Applicant and potential child care providers must show proof of residency by submitting a current utility bill, rental lease agreement, telephone, sewer/water, insurance, or 911 address. This information will be required during the intake process from both applicant and potential child care provider. Applicants who have one of their older siblings caring for younger siblings MUST provide FBIC CCP with proof that the older sibling is not living in the household (e.g., current utility bill, current driver's license, or current checking account, etc.)

**D. Verification of Work, School, Training or Job Search**

**1. Employment**

As part of the initial application process, an income verification form must be completed by the applicant and then forwarded by the applicant to the payroll department of their current employer for verification. The work verification form verifies the applicant's normal work schedule (e.g., Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., etc. and income). Applicants must work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week to qualify. The employer may fax the completed form to (406) 353-2515.

**2. School/Training**

If applicant is attending school, a list of classes and class times must be on file to verify applicant's current status as a student. The class schedule must be included with the application. The time between classes will be considered study time and will be allowable.

**3. Job Search**

If an applicant is actively seeking employment, child care assistance will be provided for job search activities. In our efforts to increase retention of child care subsidy the FBIC CCP has determined we will include job search activities in determining eligibility not to exceed a three (3) month period.

**4. Self-Employment**

If an applicant is self-employed, taxes paid from the prior year will be taken into account for eligibility purposes. A self-employment form must be signed and on file stating the number of hours that the applicant(s) may be away from home for that purpose. The average monthly income with check stub or verification of income received and the type of self-employment in which the applicant is engaged will be accepted.

**E. Signed Release Form**

Applicant must complete and sign the Consent to Release Information form. This procedure is used to avoid abuse of the program and to verify information, as necessary.

**F. immunization**

Immunizations are required for **every** child in the household. Verification records for immunization must be signed by the parent or physicians stating immunization required or verification of the date required immunization will be given. A copy of immunization records from school or clinic will also be accepted.

**G. Provider Statement**

A Provider Statement must be filled out for every provider the parent chooses to use whether such provider is tribally licensed or unlicensed. The Provider Statement must be on file before any payments will be made to the provider. Once a provider statement is completed and on file, that provider is deemed a mandated reporter and is obligated by law to report any suspected abuse/neglect upon the child for which they are caring.

**1. Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect**

A mandatory reporter is a person who is required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Every state within the U.S. Territories has statutes that identify mandatory reporters of child maltreatment and specify the circumstances under which they are to report.

*“Person responsible for a child’s care”* is defined in state law to include a parent, guardian, teacher, school administrator, daycare provider, babysitter (paid or unpaid), a counselor, coach, or other lawful custodian with responsibilities of care for the child.

**The failure to report knowledge of reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect is a criminal misdemeanor offense.**

**2. Licensed Provider Contracts**

If an applicant is using a legally licensed provider, a copy of the contract between provider and applicant is due in the Child Care Office before payments will be made for children in the program. A copy of the contract with the provider’s and the parent’s signature is required to verify both parties agree with the content in the contract. Payments will be made according to what is defined in the contract, NOT to exceed the program’s maximum reimbursement rates. Anything over the FBIC CCP child care rates will be the responsibility of the parent.

**3. Tribally licensed Provider’s Criminal Background Check**

If an applicant is using a Tribally licensed provider, criminal background check (CBGC) forms must be completed and signed with provider’s original signature and returned to the FBIC CCP. The FBIC CCP will do an initial Federal and State CBGC (fingerprinting) and will recur every five years. The Fort Belknap Child Care Program will update the background information every two years by requesting a name based check with the State and Local courts. Payment to the prospective Child Care Provider will not be paid until the provider has passed a criminal background check.

The FBIC CCP requires that a background check will be conducted on ALL INDIVIDUALS 18 years and older who will have access to children receiving child care assistance and/or who are in a home that is to be used for child care. These forms must be signed and returned promptly. Based on the results of the criminal background check the FBIC CCP will notify applicant in writing, the approval/disapproval for child care services.

These confidential forms will be kept on file at the Fort Belknap Child Care Program. The FBIC CCP will ensure Criminal History Record information will be secured in a separate, controlled access file cabinet or lock box. Dissemination can be made only to another authorized agency/organization and only for the authorized purpose consistent with the original purpose for which the criminal history record was requested. An applicant may request a copy of his/her

background check. When disseminating to the applicant, the Child Care Manager must identify face to face with photo identification.

Issues of concern that result in a negative effect and an automatic disqualification from the program include, but are not limited to the following:

Homicides – Sex Crimes – Incest – Crimes against persons – Obscene telephone calls – child abuse/neglect – child protection – substantiated assault.

**4. Disqualification Factors**

Any prospective child care provider who has had a child protection case against them will automatically be disqualified from providing care under the program. For verification of child protection cases, names will be discussed between local counties and Child Social Service Programs to determine disqualification factors. If any questionable information is revealed in the Background investigation, the FBIC CCP Manager will contact the applicant for clarification of questionable information or stop the application process if the information obtained indicates that children may enter a dangerous/unsafe situation if placed in this home environment. Child safety shall be paramount in all decisions made by the Child Care Manager.

Applicants who have been denied approval as a caregiver and believe that their criminal record is not accurate can appeal the accuracy directly to the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Montana Department of Justice or the Local Court System depending on the source of the information.

**A. Waiver Procedures:**

If the individual has a disqualifying factor, the Child Care Manager will give a written notice that the applicant does not meet the criteria for approval and inform the applicant of the procedure in which they may request reconsideration. The request will then be reviewed by the designated review team. Along with the request, the following shall be submitted:

- I. A signed release authorizing the FBICCCP to access all civil, criminal and other reports relevant to the disqualifying event;
- II. Three letters of recommendation;
- III. The age of the individual at the time of the disqualify event and any mitigating circumstances when the event occurred;
- IV. Severity of nature of crime;
- V. Any successful completion of any rehabilitation programs since the event; and
- VI. Full employment history, including name, address, and phone number of prior employers.

Once the review team has made a determination, the recommendation of the review team will be communicated back to the FBICCCP. The FBIC CCP will then uphold the denial or overturn the denial based on the evidence presented.

**5. Drug Screening**

The Fort Belknap Indian Community and the Fort Belknap Child Care Program strive for a drug-free environment for children. A provider has an obligation to be in suitable mental and physical condition



while providing child care. The Fort Belknap Child Care Program will require a drug-free child care environment for the children.

The use, possession, sale or purchase of any illegal drug or prescription drug (without a valid prescription) is prohibited. Any violation of this policy will result in immediate termination of payments from the Child Care Program.

All Tribally licensed child care and/or licensed homes will be subject to pre-employment drug testing and testing for drugs and alcohol and/or a chemical dependency assessment, (upon request) when "reasonable cause" is believed that a child care provider is abusing drugs or alcohol. If a provider fails the drug screening test, he/she will be offered an opportunity for a Rule 25 assessment with a Chemical Dependency Counselor. A rule 25 Assessment is a chemical use assessment conducted by a Chemical Dependency Rule 25 Assessor. The time frame for a Rule 25 Assessment will be (1) month from drug screening. The FBICCCP will review the Chemical Dependency Counselor's recommendation and evaluate the status of his/her suitability to provide care. If the FBICCCP Staff feel that children placed with the provider are at risk, the program has the right to refuse child care payments to this provider and/or report the findings to the parents and the local Social Services Program. A drug test that is refused will be considered a positive result for the purposes of the Fort Belknap Child Care Program. A Child Care Provider who refuses to comply with a drug screening test or a chemical dependency assessment will be subject to immediate termination of payment from the Child Care Program.

**\*\*\*"Reasonable Cause"** includes but is not limited to:

1. Involvement in or responsibility for an accident that caused or could have caused serious injury to a child care child;
2. Habits that appear to be the result of impaired judgment that may be caused by drugs or alcohol; or
3. Credible reports received by; a Child Care Staff, Advisory Board members, FBIC Council members or Gros Ventre/Assiniboine tribal members or other persons.

## **H. Health and Safety Standards**

### **A. Health and Safety Checklist**

A Health and Safety checklist form must be completed by the unlicensed provider. The following documents must be on file with the FBICCCP:

1. Health Statement;
2. Release of information for every person in the household that is over 18 years of age;
3. Immunization Record for all person/persons included on the Application;
4. T.B. (Tuberculosis Skin Test) annually;
5. Pre-employment Drug Testing
6. First Aid Certification;
7. Infant, Child and Adult CPR certification;
8. Background check (all persons in the household 18 years of age and Older); and

9. Copy of valid Montana Driver's License, valid tribal enrollment Identification card or other identification documents.

Providers licensed by the State of Montana will provide a copy of their license to the Child Care Manager which demonstrates the above requirements have been met.

The FBICCCP will, upon request, provide Health and Safety items at no charge to their new Child Care Providers who have never received them. These Health and Safety items include; First Aid Kits, Fire Extinguishers, Health and Safety informational packets, smoke alarms, and if caring for infants and toddlers, Safety gates, electrical outlet covers and door/drawer covers.

**B. Staffing Ratio**

The Fort Belknap Child Care Program will utilize the following child/adult ratios during all hours of operation:

ages 0-3            4:1

ages 3-5           6:1

ages 5-12          10:1

Providers own children under the age of 6, as well as any other child in the home, will be included in the child/provider ratio.

**C. Diaper Changing Policy**

All FBIC CCP providers must follow diaper changing training and materials Provided in the provider packet.

**D. Hand washing Policy**

All FBIC CCP providers must follow hand washing training and materials provided in the provider packet.

**E. Cleaning/Sanitizing Policy**

All FBIC CCP providers must follow cleaning/sanitizing training and Materials provided in the provider packets.

**F. Safe Sleep Policy**

All FBIC CCP providers must follow safe sleep practices training and materials provided in the provider packets.

**G. Medication Policy**

FBIC CCP providers do not dispense medications. Case by case situations where children need medicine can be discussed with the Child Care Manager, at which time parent will be required to submit a medication administration form.

**H. Emergency Preparedness**

All FBIC CCP providers/teachers will follow the FBIC Disaster Plan and consider the State of Montana YIKES (Your Inventory for Keeping Everyone Safe) Planning Guide For Emergency Response Planning in Child Care.

I. **Water/ Pools**

Pools are not allowed to be used/present in homes or facilities used by FBIC CCP providers.

J. **Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs**

Tobacco use, alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited on the premises of the program (both indoor and outdoor environments) and in any vehicles used while transporting child care children. Caregivers/teachers should not use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs on the premises during child care program's paid time, including break times.

K. **Weapons**

**Centers** – should not have any firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded), darts, bows and arrows, cap pistols, stun guns, paint ball guns, or any other toy that may cause harm to a child, on the premises at any time. Weapons, such as knives, ice picks, hammers, blackjack, slingshot, Billy clubs, metal knuckles, dagger, razor with unguarded blade, and any metal pipe or bar used or intended to be used as a club, among others, and any other weapon that may be used to inflict bodily harm, are prohibited.

**Family Child Care Homes**—(small or large) – Any of the items listed above must be unloaded, equipped with child protective devices, and kept under lock and key. Ammunition must be locked separately in areas inaccessible to the children. Parents/Guardians should be informed about this policy.

L. **Training**

All providers (licensed or Tribally licensed) must complete 20 hours of training annually, (Will be provided by FBIC CCP). Tribally licensed providers must attend these training sessions of 20 hours per year, as well as any other mandatory training that develops.

The providers will be required to complete the following Health and Safety topics within 30 days of their effective date of service;

\*Safe Sleep (SIDS) in Child Care

\*Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome.

The providers will be required to complete the following Health and Safety topics within 90 days of their effective date of service;

\*Emergency Preparedness in Child Care

\*Child Abuse & Neglect – Mandatory Reporting

\*Medication Administration 1

\*Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases and Immunization

\*Protecting Children from Harm.

\*Family Engagement and guidance/together we grow

The Child Care Program will issue a Tribal Child Care License upon completion of the mandatory health and safety courses.

From time to time, FBIC CCP will send out notices of upcoming training sessions. Tribally licensed providers are encouraged to attend these informational sessions. The FBIC CCP can pay for the training registration costs to ensure that the health and safety of the children in their care is met.

## II. Eligibility – Application Approval

When all verification forms listed in Section I have been provided, the effective date of eligibility is one of the following, whichever is later;

1. The date all required forms have been supplied, or
2. The beginning date of employment, education or job search, or
3. When funds become available.

The parents will receive an incomplete notice within 14 working days of date application received if application is incomplete or applicant has not turned in the necessary paperwork to complete the application. Incomplete files will not be placed on the waiting list until it is complete and the necessary paperwork has been verified. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the FBIC CCP receives all required paperwork and verification. Children who require child care assistance must be twelve years of age and younger, with the exception of special needs children. Children with special needs from thirteen through the age of eighteen may be eligible. Documentation is required from a medical doctor stating the child's special needs.

If child care assistance is approved for an individual, child care will be authorized for the time spent working, job seeking, or attending training courses, and up to one hour of travel time (depending on the mileage to and from the destination).

The FBIC CCP may terminate a family's participation in the child care subsidy program if after sixty (60) days any of the following occur:

1. A participating parent has not turned in hours for 60 days, unless FBIC CCP Staff have been notified and alternative arrangements have been made with the Child Care Director;
2. Due to change in circumstances beyond a parent's control, one of the parents are home with the children. If this occurs during the service year we can keep the file open for 90 days. After that time the family's child care assistance will be terminated unless arrangements have been made with the Child Care Director.
3. If parent attends school or works at a school, the file may be placed on hold during the entire summer. If he/she does not attend summer school and does not find temporary employment, child care assistance will resume when classes resume.

Child care cannot be authorized unless sufficient funds are available. An eligible applicant is not guaranteed assistance unless funding is available. An eligible applicant cannot waive or reduce his/her salary, child support, or other sources of income in order to become eligible for, or to remain eligible for the child care subsidy program.

**A. Child Care Needs Form**

During the intake appointment, the Child Care Director will accept all completed forms from the applicant. The Child Care Needs Form helps provide the FBIC CCP the necessary information in the determination of the needs for child care for that parent's service year.

**B. Eligibility Certification Form**

Once all the required forms are on file and the file is deemed complete by the Child Care Specialist, the complete file is then certified eligible by the Child Care Director and put on the program if funds are available or placed on the waiting list until funds become available.

**C. Waiting list Status**

When funds are not available and a parent's file is found complete and eligible for assistance, the parent will be placed on the waiting list according to the date in which the file was completed and NOT the date on the original application. Applicants will be taken off the waiting list in the order in which they were received. The applicant's service year will be effective the date he/she is taken off the waiting list and NOT the date of the application.

**D. Service Year and Continuity of Care**

A family is eligible for services for one (1) year from the time child care assistance is approved. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to re-apply for child care assistance when their service year ends. Notifications will be sent 60 days prior stating the need for re-determination. The family's eligibility will be re-determined after one year of service. In the event the family becomes income ineligible after one year of service, the FBIC CCP will implement a gradual phase out period not to exceed 12 months, providing their income does not exceed 85% of the Federal Poverty Level. If a child leaves the home to live in another home, child care assistance cannot be given for the period that the child is not in the applicant's home. For purposes of Continuity of Care, FBIC CCP has the flexibility to determine whether or not a child changing families during the eligibility period would require a new eligibility determination prior to the next scheduled redetermination.

**E. Notification**

The Child Care Manager will notify an applicant by mail when he/she becomes eligible. This will include dates child care is authorized, notification of monthly co-payment amount (*as determined by the basic sliding fee scale*) and the number of hours authorized per day.

**F. Status Change**

The family must report any changes in status within 10 days. The changes that must be reported include:

1. Address changes (moved to new residence – must provide verification of new residence);
2. Change in household size;
3. Any changes in income. The child care program will use this information in the determination of a possible **decrease** of co-payment. The program will not increase the co-payment amount during the service year;
4. Change in marital status for purpose of household size for possible decrease in co-payment purposes;
5. Change of eligible activities such as; education, training, job change or job search status; and

6. Withdrawal or temporary withdrawal from the program. Parents not using child care for more than 60 days who have not contacted the Fort Belknap Child Care Program will have their file closed.

**G. Authorized Persons to Pick up Child**

Children may only be released to adults authorized by parents or legal guardians whose identity has been verified by photo identification. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons authorized to pick up child should be obtained during the enrollment process and regularly reviewed, along with clarification/documentation of any custody issues/court orders. The legal guardian(s) of the child should be established and documented at this time.

**III. Waiting List**

When a family requests information about child care assistance, the FBIC CCP shall perform a preliminary determination of eligibility. If it appears that a family is eligible and funds are not immediately available, the program will accept a completed application and add the family to the waiting list. Families on the waiting list shall be moved into the child care subsidy program as funding permits. *This program operates on a first come-first serve basis.*

**IV. Approved Child Care Hours**

The number of hours authorized depends on the type of activity a parent(s) is engaging in and the amount of travel time required each day. A maximum of 45 hours of child care can be approved per week. Child care is normally approved for the hours the client is working, actually job seeking, or attending training, and will include up to one hour of travel time. Requests for any extra hours not authorized will need prior approval by the Child Care staff person and verification from employer/school that additional time is needed. The maximum is 9 hours per day and possibly one additional hour of travel time per child.

**1. Employment**

Child Care assistance during employment shall be approved for all hours of work, including break and mealtime not to exceed the maximum 9 hours per day plus travel time. The program will not pay for child care for Personal Leave or Vacation Leave taken by the client.

**2. Job Search Activities**

Job Search includes contacting and attending interviews of various employers. Child Care assistance will be provided for job search activities for no more than a three (3) month period. At the end of the three month period, parents will be required to visit the child care office for redetermination of eligible child care activities.

**3. Education and Training**

Child Care assistance during education/training shall be approved for all hours of the education program for all full time students including time between nonconsecutive classes. Full-time is defined as 12 or more credit hours or 20 hours of classroom time. This will also include study time and academic appointments. Services will be approved up to one hour per day for travel time.

**V. Payments to Providers**

**A. Child Care Schedules**

The child care timesheets must be filled out once or twice a month and returned to FBIC CCP office where it will be reviewed for accuracy, approved, and then sent to the accounting office for payment. Payments are set according to the child care calendar schedule.

Each timesheet must be signed by the parent and the provider at the end of each pay period, not in advance and must include the provider's address and vendor number. Timesheets done in pencil will be returned to the provider. Parents are asked to review the schedule for accuracy before signing.

**Timesheets that are not received in our office by noon of the due date on the child care calendar schedule will need to be held for the next accounts payable date. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Child care timesheets must be turned no later than 30 days past the service date to ensure payment. Timesheets turned in later than 30 days will not be honored and will be the parent's responsibility to pay the provider.

**Parents are responsible to pay the provider for any personal hours.**

**B. Accounts Receivable/Payable Schedule**

Upon receiving the child care schedule FBICCCP staff will verify hours/signatures, deduct the parent's monthly co-payment, and then calculate the hours and pay the required rate (tribally licensed, licensed or center rate).

Child care timesheets must be turned in on a timely manner. Timesheets with dates more than 30 days old will not be honored and it will be the parent's responsibility to pay the provider.

Dates submitted that are more than 30 days old will be marked off the timesheet and we will only pay for dates turned in less than 30 days old.

If the child care services are approved by the FBICCCP staff, the provider will receive payment according to the child care schedule calendars.

**C. Calendar**

A child care schedule calendar is given to every parent and provider on child care assistance. Each child care calendar will have the dates to submit schedules and when to expect payment, days the FBICCCP is closed as well as training opportunities, health and safety information and holidays.

**VI. Co-payments**

The income guidelines are a fixed percent of the annual gross income according to the basic sliding fee scale. Also shown on the basic sliding fee scale are amounts listed for co-payments. All families participating in the basic sliding fee program must pay a monthly co-payment. The Child Care Program will waive the co-payments for the families enrolled in the Early Head Start and the Head Start Wrap-Around Program.

**Parent Responsibility**

The Child Care Program will only pay for the amount of days and hours that are agreed upon at the time of application approval or for which a prior authorization is in place.

Upon eligibility, the applicant or applicants are informed of the amount of their monthly co-payment. **The co-payment fee should be paid to the provider by money order, cash or check payable to the Tribally licensed or licensed child care provider.** The co-payments are due by the last day of each month. The provider is then required to give the parent a receipt for each monthly co-payment, and signed by the child care provider. These monthly parent co-payments are then deducted from the child care provider's check, which is issued by the Child Care Program/Finance Department.

The provider checks are picked up by the Child Care Manager from the Finance Office and distributed at the Child Care Office. The provider does not need to go to the Finance Office to get their check, unless first cleared with the Child Care Manager, which will be approved in legitimate emergencies only. A copy of the check is then signed by the person picking up the check. No checks will be given to a person other than the provider. If the provider calls and sends a note with a designated person, that person only, who is listed on the note, can pick up the provider's check.

Co-payments are to be made to the provider on a monthly basis. This transaction will be between the parent and the provider to arrange a payment plan. **Providers must notify the FBICCCP of late co-payments.** Any applicant with late co-payments past one month will get a notice from the FBICCCP acknowledging a co-payment has been missed and stating that their child care will be on hold until the co-payment is received by the provider. Co-payments later than two months will result in a termination of assistance if not paid in a timely manner to the provider.

The parent must notify the program within five days before changing child care providers, and notified in advance, of any temporary providers, to ensure that all providers' requirements are met. Providers must meet all tribally licensed child care provider requirements before payments can be made.

Parents are responsible for making their own child care provider arrangements, although there are guidelines that must be followed in choosing one. The parents are responsible for choosing the provider that best meets the needs of their family. The FBICCCP encourages the use of tribally licensed child care providers. Any and all providers must ensure that parents have complete and total access to their children while in their care. The FBICCCP has a list of tribally licensed providers and licensed providers.

Parents may use a legally unlicensed caregiver if they meet the following requirements:

1. Providers must be over the age of eighteen.
2. Providers must not be living in the same household as the parent/children.
3. The provider must only care for one family's children other than their own, with a maximum of five (5) children in the provider's care (provider's own children are to be included in this number).
4. The provider must pass a criminal background check prior to payment.
5. CPR training/education is required.

#### **A. Provider Responsibilities**

A Provider's Statement, signed by both the parent and the provider, will need to be on file stating that each of these requirements has been met. The FBICCCP will process the Criminal Background Check on every provider. If a prospective provider has had a criminal background check done within the last 30 days, the provider will need to acquire a copy of that completed check and have it sent to the FBICCCP. A new Provider's statement and Criminal Background check is required on every new or back-up child care provider used.

If a child care provider charges more than the maximum rates of the program, the parent will need to set up an agreement to pay for the balance. The rates set for Fort Belknap Child Care Program are as follows; per hour and per child for tribally licensed providers and the standard rate shown in a licensed day care provider policy handbook:

\$3.00 0-36 months – in-home



\$2.50 3 – 12 years – in-home  
\$3.25 center-based  
\$3.50 special needs – in-home and center based

The FBICCCP only pays for hours that the child is in the provider's care (less parent's personal leave or if the child is in school).

Hours turned in by the provider must have a parent's signature in order to be processed. Failure to sign the schedules may result in a late payment to the provider. The FBICCCP will not be held responsible for any late fees that may be incurred.

School-age children: Any provider submitting for child care during normal school hours for children ages 5-12 years old (including Head Start Children) must submit an absentee form (included in provider packet). Child Care programs should not expel, suspend, or otherwise limit the amount of services (including denying outdoor time, withholding food, or using food as a reward/punishment) provided to a child or family on the basis of challenging behaviors or a health/safety condition or situation.

Expulsion refers to terminating the enrollment of a child or family in the regular group setting because of a challenging behavior or a health condition. Suspension and other limitations in services include all other reductions in the amount of time a child may be in attendance of the regular group setting. Providers should not require the child to cease attendance or reduce the amount of time a child may attend unless there is a serious danger to the provider or other children in attendance. Providers will first work with the family and child care manager before these measures can be taken.

### C. Late Co-Payment

If a parent fails to pay the monthly co-payment, there will be a ten-day grace period. If payment is not received after the ten-day grace period, the child care provider must notify the Child Care Program staff immediately. **The Child Care Program will then send a notice of possible suspension of child care assistance. For any co-payments over 30 days past due, child care assistance will be stopped until full payment is received. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS. Any co-payment later than 60 days will be just cause to drop applicant from the program; the applicant's file will then be closed. Random calls to the child care provider will be made throughout the year to ensure co-payments have been made.**

All the providers receive a 1099 on anything over \$600. **NO TAXES ARE TAKEN OUT OF CHECKS ISSUED TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS. PAYING TAXES ON THE INCOME IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.** Providers will get a form 1099 at the end of the year from the Tribal Finance Office to file with the IRS or state of Montana.

The FBIC CCP encourages all providers to talk to their tax representative about child care.

## VII. Rights and Responsibilities

### A. Right to keep information about you private (Data Privacy).

Most of the information the FBICCCP collects about parents will be classified as private. That means that parent and the government agencies that need information can see it; others can not without a signed release from the parent. Occasionally statistics and other anonymous data will be taken from the information collected. This is public and open to anyone, but it will not identify individuals in any way.

### B. Purpose of Information

Information parents are asked to provide will be used to determine whether they are eligible for child care assistance and to enable the FBIC CCP to collect federal or state funds for the services provided, and to

develop audit programs, individuals are not legally required to provide any information and may refuse to do so. However, in choosing not to give information, individuals will probably not be able to receive the services for which they are applying.

#### **Additional Requirements**

1. The maximum amount of hours that the Child Care Program will pay for is forty-five (45) hours per week, per child.
2. Parents must complete our updated application with all supporting documents. (Double check with me to make certain that I have birth certificates for all your children).
3. Documentation must be submitted as to the reason the school age child is not in school when school is in session. The Child Care Program will NOT pay for those hours if the documentation does not accompany the provider timesheet.
4. Clients are encouraged to apply for child support if the other parent is not living in the home. The FBIC CCP has enclosed in the application a child support request form to be submitted to the Child Enforcement Collections Office.
5. Head Start children are able to utilize the after school Wrap Around Program. The FBIC CCP will pay for 3 hours per day and all day Friday's during the school year with the exceptions of class cancelation and tribal holidays.
6. If there are two parents/guardians in the home and one is not working and cannot watch the child(ren), documentation must be submitted as to the reason.
7. Providers are required to complete twenty (20) hours of training annually. Failure to attend and complete those trainings will be reason for termination from the Program.
8. Home visits will be completed on an annual basis. They must be completed in sixty (60) days of your service as a provider. Failure to allow the home visitor entrance into your home is justification for termination from the Program.
9. Any false information on the client and the provider application will be reason to be terminated from the Program.
10. A single parent family's child care services will be based on the required work activity up to nine (9) hours per day.

We have tried to include all areas of the child care subsidy program. If you have any questions that are not addressed here, please call the Child Care Manager at (406) 353-2827.