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Through this information collection, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is gathering data on the Tribal Lead Agency's grant program to understand the design and effectiveness of the program and to inform technical assistance needs. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response for the Triennial Child Count (for all Tribal Lead Agencies) 60 hours per response for Part I (for all direct funded Tribal Lead Agencies), five hours per response for Part II (for direct funded Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations) and 20 hours per response for Part III (for direct funded Tribal Lead Agencies with medium and large allocations), including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This collection of information is required to retain a benefit (P.L. 105-285, Section 680(b) as amended). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB number is 0970-0198 and the expiration date is 12/31/2027. For any comments on this collection of information, please contact ACF's Office of Child Care.



Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan

for

Tribe: **Fort Belknap Indian Community**

Federal Fiscal Years 2026–2028

Plan Status: Approved as of 2025-09-30 15:06:33 GMT

This Plan describes the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program to be administered by the CCDF Tribal Lead Agency for the period from 10/01/2025 to 9/30/2028. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Tribal Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including amending the options selected or described herein.

For purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein of applicable laws and regulations are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text. The Tribal Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to laws and regulations regardless of these modifications.

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Introduction and How to Approach Plan Development

Overview

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.), together with Section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 618), authorize the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the primary federal funding source devoted to supporting families with low incomes afford child care and to increasing the quality of child care for all children. The CCDF program is administered by the Office of Child Care (OCC) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and provides resources to state, territory, and Tribal governments via their designated CCDF Lead Agency.

CCDF plays a vital role in supporting family well-being and child development. It facilitates parental employment, training, and education, improving the economic stability and well-being of participating families. It also supports child development, promoting safe high-quality care and learning environments for children when child care is needed.

As required by the CCDBG Act, this Tribal CCDF Plan serves as the Tribal Lead Agency's application for a three-year cycle of CCDF funds and is the primary mechanism OCC uses to determine Tribal Lead Agency compliance with the requirements of the statute and regulations. Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies must comply with the rules set forth in the CCDBG Act and corresponding ACF-issued rules and regulations found at 45 CFR Part 98, which are cited throughout the Plan. For example, the citation for immunization requirements is noted as §98.41(a)(1)(i). The CCDF Plan is a fundamental part of OCC's oversight of CCDF and is designed to align with and complement other oversight mechanisms, including administrative and financial data reporting, audits, and the ACF-700 Tribal Annual Report.

The Tribal CCDF program includes flexibilities specifically to address a broad range of Tribal needs and population sizes, including tiered program requirements based on the size of the Tribal Lead Agency's CCDF allocation. CCDF categorizes a Tribal Lead Agency as receiving a small, medium, or large allocation based on its allocation in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2016. A Tribal Lead Agency designated as "small allocation" received less than \$250,000 in FFY 2016. A Tribal Lead Agency designated as "medium allocation" received between \$250,000 and \$1 million in FFY 2016. A Tribal Lead Agency designated as "large allocation" received over \$1 million in FFY 2016. A Tribal Lead Agency with a small allocation has the most flexibility in spending CCDF funds, though they must spend all their CCDF program funds in alignment with the goals and purposes of the CCDF program and comply with health and safety, monitoring, background checks, and quality spending requirements. To align with these more limited CCDF program requirements, a Tribal Lead Agency with a small allocation completes an abbreviated CCDF Plan.

Organization of Plan

In its Tribal CCDF Plan, a Tribal Lead Agency must describe how it implements the Tribal CCDF program. The Plan is organized into the following parts and sections:

Part I (all Tribal Lead Agencies): Three sections on program administration, the triennial child count, health and safety, and quality improvement.

Part II (only for Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations): One section on direct services.

Part III (only for Tribal Lead Agencies with medium and large allocations): Three sections on child and family eligibility, enrollment and continuity of care, equal access, and family outreach and consumer education.

Appendix 1: Triennial Child Count Declaration/Demonstration: Relevant for Consortia Tribal Lead Agencies of all allocation sizes. Consortia Tribal Lead Agencies must submit a child count declaration/demonstration for each member Tribe for the Tribal Lead Agency to act on its behalf. The template (or a similar document) must be completed and signed by an individual authorized to act for the participating member Tribe/Village. The Consortia Lead Agency must upload the declaration/demonstration as part of their child count submission for each member Tribe/Village.

Appendix 2: Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI): Relevant for all Tribal Lead Agencies of all allocation sizes. A Tribal Lead Agency has the **option** to submit Appendix 2, which will serve as a notification to OCC that it plans to join the TELI Network and receive universal technical assistance on developing and strengthening Tribal early childhood systems building. This initiative is voluntary, and Tribal Lead Agencies are not required to complete this appendix.

Completing the Plan

This Plan aims to capture the most accurate and up-to-date information about how a Tribal Lead Agency is implementing its Tribal CCDF program in compliance with the requirements of CCDF. In responding to Plan questions, Tribal Lead Agencies should provide concise and specific summaries and/or may use bullet points as appropriate to the question.

Tribal CCDF Plan Submission

A Tribal Lead Agency will submit its Plan to OCC electronically through the Child Care Automated Reporting System (CARS). CARS will include all language and questions included in the final Tribal CCDF Plan template approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

A Tribal Lead Agency must submit its FFY 2026 – 2028 CCDF Plan to OCC no later than July 1, 2025.

Note: The format of the questions in CARS could be modified from the pdf version of the document to ensure compliance with Section 508 policies regarding accessibility to electronic and information technology for individuals with disabilities.

Plan Review

OCC will review submitted Tribal CCDF Plans for completeness and compliance with federal policies. Each Tribal Lead Agency will receive a letter approximately 90 days after the Plan is due to inform the Tribal Lead Agency that its Plan has been approved or approved with conditions.

Amendment Process

OCC recognizes that a Tribal Lead Agency may wish to modify and adapt its CCDF program to address evolving needs and priorities. A Tribal Lead Agency must submit amendments to its Plan as it makes substantial policy and program changes during the three-year Plan cycle, including when addressing areas of non-compliance.

PART I: ALL TRIBAL LEAD AGENCIES

1 CCDF Program Administration

1.1 Definition of Indian Child (Direct Funded Lead Agencies Only)

For the purposes of determining eligibility, Tribal Lead Agencies must define Indian child (§98.81(b)(2)(i)). This definition must be limited to children from federally recognized Indian Tribes, consistent with the CCDBG Act's definition of Indian Tribe (§98.2).

This definition could include children who are Tribal members, whose membership is pending, who are eligible for membership, and/or are children or descendants of members and could also include adopted children, foster children, or stepchildren.

1.1.1 Indian Child

For the purposes of determining CCDF eligibility, the Tribal Lead Agency defines an Indian child as: **Children who are enrolled members, whose membership is pending, who are eligible for membership of a federally recognized Indian tribe or descendent as the biological child of a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe.**

1.2 Definition of Service Area (Direct Funded Lead Agencies Only)

Programs and activities must be carried out for the benefit of Indian children living on or near the Indian reservation, which is called the service area. A Tribal Lead Agency must define its service area in the Tribal CCDF Plan (§98.83(b)). The service area must be within reasonably close geographic proximity to the borders of a Tribe's reservation (except for Tribes in Alaska, California, and Oklahoma). Tribes that do not have reservations must establish service areas within reasonably close geographic proximity to the area where the Tribe's population resides.

Tribal Lead Agencies are expected to be able to provide services to eligible families throughout the service area. ACF will not approve an entire state as a Tribe's service area.

1.2.1 Service Area

- a. The Tribal Lead Agency defines the service area as: **The interior boundaries of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and the towns of Harlem, Montana and Dodson, Montana which are within 10 miles from the exterior boundaries of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation.**
- b. **Optional:** In addition to the description above, a clearly labeled map of the service area is attached. Attachment: **Document was not provided by TLA**

1.2.2 Neighboring and/or Overlapping Service Areas

Is the service area (as defined in 1.2.1) neighboring and/or overlapping with the service area(s) of any other Tribal Lead Agencies?

No.

Yes. If yes, answer the following questions:

- a. Identify those other Tribal Lead Agencies with neighboring and/or overlapping service areas.
Describe:
- b. Describe the Tribal Lead Agency's process for ensuring unduplicated child counts for neighboring and/or overlapping service area(s):

1.3 Child Count (Direct Funded and P.L. 102-477 Lead Agencies)

For the purposes of determining a Tribe/Tribal organization's annual CCDF program funding level, the Tribal Lead Agency is required to conduct and submit a triennial child count of children younger than age 13, (§98.80). The child count submitted is not reflective of the number of children who receive direct child care services. Instead, the child count gives the number of children younger than 13 who meet the Tribal Lead Agency's definition of Indian child and who reside in the designated service area.

The Tribal child count will be effective from October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2028, and will be valid for three years. If a consortium gains or loses a member organization(s), then the adjustments will be made accordingly.

Note: A consortium must also submit a declaration/demonstration for each participating member Tribe/Village. (See Appendix 1: Triennial Child Count Declaration/Demonstration for a template).

A Tribal Lead Agency may not count any children who are included in the child count of another CCDF Tribal Lead Agency. The Tribal Lead Agency is required to confer with all other CCDF Tribal Lead Agencies that have neighboring and/or overlapping service areas.

1.3.1 Child Count

(If the Tribal Lead Agency is not a consortium, it is required to answer this question.)

The Tribal Lead Agency certifies that the number of Indian children younger than age 13 (as defined in 1.1.1 or the approved P.L. 102-477 Plan) who reside in the service area (as defined in 1.2.1 or in the approved P.L. 102-477 Plan) for the Tribal Lead Agency is: **1627**

1.3.2 Consortium Child Count

(If the Tribal Lead Agency is a consortium, it is required to answer this question.)

The Tribal Lead Agency certifies that the number of Indian children younger than age 13 (as defined in 1.1.1 or in the approved P.L. 102-477 Plan) who reside in the service area (as defined in 1.2.1 or in the approved P.L. 102-477 Plan) for the consortium Tribal Lead Agency and consortium members are:

Consortium Tribal Lead Agency	Mandatory Count of Children Less than 13 Years Old	Discretionary Count of Children Less than 13 Years Old
TOTAL		

Consortium Member	Mandatory Count of Children Less than 13 Years Old	Discretionary Count of Children Less than 13 Years Old	Signed Declaration/Demonstration for Each Consortium Member (upload letter) <i>Example in Appendix 1</i>

1.3.3 102-477 Reallotted Tribal Discretionary Funds

(If a Tribe has a P.L. 102-477 consolidated plan, it is required to answer this question.)

Reallotted Discretionary funds are unobligated current grant year Discretionary funds re-awarded into the same originating grant year by ACF to other Tribal Lead Agencies (thus retaining original obligation and liquidation requirements). To be eligible to receive reallotted funds, the Tribal Lead Agency must indicate their interest below.

Does the Tribal Lead Agency request discretionary funds should they be available through the reallocation process?

1.4 CCDF Leadership

This section identifies the Tribal Nation or participating member Tribes/Villages of a Tribal consortium leadership of the CCDF program, including the designated Tribal Lead Agency. It also addresses who was consulted in the development of the Tribal CCDF Plan and how the Tribal Lead Agency plans to coordinate CCDF services with other entities.

1.4.1 Program Compliance

By submitting this Plan, the Tribal Lead Agency assures that it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the CCDF Plan, and that it is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act (42 U.S.C. § 9857 et seq.), as amended by the CCDBG Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-186); section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 618); and all other applicable federal laws and regulations.

Check this box to provide assurance.

1.4.2 Tribe or Tribal Consortium Information

- a. Official name of the federally recognized Tribe as listed in the Federal Register or Tribal consortium: **Fort Belknap Indian Community**
- b. Name of Tribal Chair, President, or Leader: **Jeffrey Stiffarm**
- c. Title: **President**
- d. Address: **656 Agency Main Street**
- e. City, state, ZIP code: **Harlem, MT 59526**
- f. Telephone number: **4063532205**
- g. Email address: **jeffrey.stiffarm@ftbelknap.org**

1.4.3 Tribal Consortium

(If the Tribal Lead Agency is a consortium, it is required to answer this question.)

A Tribal consortium refers to a partnership between two or more Tribal governments authorized by the governing bodies of those Tribes/Alaska Native Villages to allow the Tribal consortium to apply for and receive CCDF funding on behalf of the participating member Tribes/Villages. A Tribal consortium must describe how it coordinates services on behalf of each of its participating member Tribes/Villages (§98.81(b)(8)(ii)).

Describe how the consortium coordinates with each participating member Tribe/Village on child care services:

1.5 Designated Tribal Lead Agency

The Tribe or Tribal consortium must designate an agency to represent the Tribe/consortium as the Tribal Lead Agency. This designated agency agrees to administer the Tribal CCDF program in accordance with applicable federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan (§98.10; §98.16(a); §98.83(a)).

The Tribal Lead Agency can be a department or sub-agency, such as the CCDF department, human services department, or workforce development department. In some cases, the Tribe itself may be the Tribal Lead Agency.

Note: An amendment to the Tribal CCDF Plan is required in the event of a change in the designated Tribal Lead Agency.

1.5.1 Designated Agency by the Tribe or Tribal Consortium

Which agency has been designated by the Tribe or Tribal consortium to administer the CCDF program?

Name of Tribal Lead Agency: **Fort Belknap Child Care Program**

1.5.2 Contact Information for the Tribal CCDF Administrator

Identify the CCDF Administrator designated by the Tribal Lead Agency. The CCDF Administrator serves as the day-to-day contact person responsible for administering the Tribal CCDF program.

If there is more than one designated contact person with shared responsibility for administering the CCDF program, please identify the Co-Administrator/Assistant Administrator and include relevant contact information for the Co-Administrator in 1.5.3.

- a. Name of Tribal CCDF Administrator: **Andrea Speak Thunder**
- b. Title: **Director**
- c. Mailing address: **656 Agency Main Street Harlem, MT 59526**
- d. Physical address (if different than mailing address): **240 Tribal Way Harlem, MT 59526**
- e. Phone number: **4063538493**
- f. Cell phone number:
- g. Email address: **andrea.speakthunder@ftbelknap.org**

1.5.3 Contact Information for the Tribal CCDF Co-Administrator/Assistant Administrator

- a. Name of Tribal CCDF Co-Administrator/Assistant Administrator:
- b. Title:
- c. Mailing address (if different from above):
- d. Physical address (if different than mailing address):
- e. Phone number:
- f. Cell phone number:
- g. Email address:

1.5.4 Contact Information for the Tribal Fiscal Contact

Identify the fiscal contact designated by the Tribal Lead Agency. The fiscal contact serves as the person who will answer questions related to the annual Financial Reporting Form for Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies (ACF-696T), and other related CCDF fiscal topics. If there is more than one designated contact person with shared responsibility for fiscal management, please identify the person in 1.5.5 and include relevant contact information:

- a. Name of Tribal fiscal contact: **Elias Goes Ahead**
- b. Title: **Grants & Contracts Specialist**
- c. Mailing address: **656 Agency Main Street Harlem, MT 59526**
- d. Physical address (if different than mailing address):
- e. Phone number: **4063538491**
- f. Cell phone number:
- g. Email address **elias.goesahead@ftbelknap.org**

1.5.5 *Optional:* Contact Information for Any Other Needed Tribal Contact

Identify any additional contacts that OCC should include in correspondence with the Tribe or Tribal Lead Agency:

- a. Name of the other Tribal contact:
- b. Title:
- c. Mailing address:
- d. Physical address (if different than mailing address):
- e. Phone number:
- f. Cell phone number:
- g. Email address:

1.6 Administration through Contracts or Agreements

The Tribal Lead Agency has broad authority to administer the CCDF program through contracts or agreements with other governmental, non-governmental, or other public or private local agencies. The Tribal Lead Agency remains the single point of contact and retains overall responsibility for the administration of the CCDF program (§98.11(a)(3)).

1.6.1 Direct Administration and Operation

Will the Tribal Lead Agency directly administer and operate the CCDF program?

Yes, the Tribal Lead Agency will directly administer and operate all aspects of the CCDF program.

No, the Tribal Lead Agency will not directly administer and implement all aspects of the CCDF program and certifies that there is a written agreement between the Tribal Lead Agency and other agencies.

1.7 Consultation in the Development of the Tribal CCDF Plan

In the development of the Tribal CCDF Plan, the Tribal Lead Agency is required to consult with appropriate representatives of the local government of the Tribal Nation (§98.14(b)). Tribal Lead Agencies are also

required to conduct a public hearing to provide an opportunity for the general public to comment on the provision of the child care services under the CCDF Plan (§98.14(c)). For the purposes of developing this CCDF Plan, consultation involves meeting with or obtaining input from appropriate representatives of the Tribal community.

1.7.1 Consultation and Representation

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it consulted with appropriate representatives of the local government of the Tribal Nation in the development of this Plan, as practicable (§98.14(b))?

Yes.

No.

1.7.2 Public Hearings

Tribal Lead Agencies are required to conduct a public hearing to provide those interested with an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF Plan (§98.14(c)). The Tribal Lead Agency must conduct at least one public hearing prior to the submission of the Tribal CCDF Plan but no earlier than January 1, 2025. The Tribal Lead Agency must provide notice of the hearing throughout the Tribe's service area. This notice must be provided no later than 20 days prior to the date of the hearing. Tribal Lead Agencies must make the contents of the draft Plan available to the public in advance of the hearing.

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it held at least one hearing after at least 20 days of public notice to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF Plan before the Plan is submitted to ACF, but no earlier than nine months before the Plan becomes effective, and it made the contents of the draft Plan available to the public in advance of the hearing?

Yes.

No.

1.7.3 Plan Availability to the Public

A Tribal Lead Agency must make its submitted and final Plan, any Plan amendments, and any waivers publicly available (§98.14(d)).

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it makes the final Plan, any subsequent Plan amendments, and waivers available to the public?

Yes.

No.

1.8 Categories of Care

Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations are not required to offer direct services. Tribal Lead Agencies with medium and large allocations must provide direct services. Tribal Lead Agencies offering direct services must identify the categories of care CCDF eligible families may choose from, including those current or planned during the three-year Plan period.

Note: Choices in 1.8.1-1.8.3 will affect skip patterns throughout the Plan.

1.8.1 Center-Based Child Care (Including Tribally Operated Centers)

Does the Tribal Lead Agency offer center-based child care providers, including Tribally operated centers, which are providers licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a nonresidential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of work of a child's parent(s)?

Yes.

No.

1.8.2 Family Child Care

Does the Tribal Lead Agency offer family child care providers, which are individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the work of a child's parent(s)?

Yes.

No.

1.8.3 In-Home Child Care

Does the Tribal Lead Agency offer in-home child care providers, which are individuals who provide child care services in the child's own home?

Yes.

No.

1.9 Coordination of Services

The Tribal Lead Agency is required, as practicable, to coordinate services with other Tribal, federal, state, and/or local child care and early childhood development programs and agencies, such as:

- Public health
- Employment services/workforce development
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Child care licensing
- Head Start and/or Early Head Start
- State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care
- Statewide afterschool network
- Emergency management and response
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- McKinney-Vento state coordinates for homeless education
- Agencies responsible for Medicaid and state children's health insurance program
- Mental health services
- Child care resource and referral agencies

A Tribal Lead Agency must demonstrate in the Plan how it encourages partnerships, if applicable and to the extent practicable, among Tribal agencies, other public agencies, other Tribes and Tribal organizations, private entities, and community-based organizations to leverage existing service delivery systems and to increase the supply and quality of services (§98.14(a)).

1.9.1 Coordination of Services

Briefly describe the ways coordination occurs and the results of those coordination efforts: ***Public Health - The Tribal Public Health Nursing Program is available to ensure that we maintain up-to-date**

immunization records for the children and providers that participate in our program. The Public Health Nursing Program also provides current TB test results for our Providers. Upon request, Public Health Nursing will provide information and training on topics such as infectious diseases and control, SIDS/Safe Sleep, Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect reporting and Tobacco Reduction and exposure, to name a few.

*Employment services/workforce development - The CCDF Program works closely with the Tribal 477 Program and Human Resources to identify and recruit eligible child care providers. The CCDF Program works with Tribal TANF to provide services to the Fort Belknap TANF recipients.

*Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) - The CCDF Program coordinates with Tribal 477/TANF Program in an effort to provide services to their program clients. The CCDF Program sets up a monthly calendar informing their clients of upcoming First Aid/CPR classes, recruitment efforts and encourages 477/TANF participants to apply for Child Care Assistance while attending school or upon entering the workforce.

*Child Care licensing - Fort Belknap Indian Community Tribal Government offers a child care certificate giving an individual or organization permission to care for children in our service area based on existing approved standards. The requirements to care for children are as follows: favorable criminal background check, pre-employment drug test, valid identification, current First Aid/CPR, Release of Information, Health Statement, current immunizations to include TB test and W-9. Additional requirements include home safety inspections (one announced, one unannounced), completion of Health and Safety Training offered through the State of Montana at www.childcaretraining.org. Training must be completed within the first 90 days of employment and all providers must receive 20 professional development per year.

*Head Start and/or Early Head Start - The CCDF Program has a partnership with the Fort Belknap Early Head Start and Fort Belknap Head Start Programs. We have consistent communication in our efforts to provide a stable, safe environment and deliver quality services to our children.

*Statewide afterschool network - The Blossom Quisno Memorial Child Care Center Wrap Around Program participates in the State of Montana CACFP which reimburses the cost of food including snacks to the program. The CCDF Director works with the State of Montana's Early Learning Network on providing transitional services to the Head Starts graduating 4-year-olds as they transition into the public school system.

*Emergency management and response - The CCDF Program works with the State of Montana in delivering classes on Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response Plans for each of our providers. The Providers are required to have a plan and emergency numbers in place for each emergency. The Fort Belknap Child Care Program has an emergency action plan in place and Providers are required to understand the protocols for each emergency.

*Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP) - The Fort Belknap Child Care Program is a participant of the Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP) with the State of Montana. The CACFP State Program will reimburse the cost of food preparation for the Child Care Center. The Fort Belknap Child Care Center works with the Indian Health Services Nutritionist to provide nutritious meals and approved menus for our children.

*McKinney-Vento state coordinates for homeless education - Children of homeless families are considered "Priority" for services in the Fort Belknap Child Care Program. Research and data indicate that children experiencing homelessness have significant impacts on their academic, social and emotional health. The Fort Belknap Child Care Program has a policy that gives priority to participants who are experiencing homelessness providing they are income eligible. The Child Care Program will provide connections to the FBIC Housing Authority and the Tribal TANF Program for job placement, education and monthly stipends to stabilize the family situation.

*Agencies responsible for Medicaid and state children's health insurance program - The Tribal CCDF Program does not address Medicaid or State Health Insurance Programs but will refer clients to advocates of the Medicaid and/or CHIP programs through the State of Montana.

*Mental health services - The CCDF Program will work on a case-by-case basis to refer children to the

mental health services offered through the Tribal Health Department. The Clinical Psychologist currently on-staff at the Tribal Health Department will provide services to our children upon request. *Child care resource and referral agencies - The Fort Belknap Child Care Program and the State of Montana's Resource and Referral agency work together to ensure our services do not overlap and coordinate our efforts to provide services to low-income families who may be need them.

1.10 Program Integrity and Accountability

The Tribal Lead Agency is responsible for making sure that policies and procedures are in place to monitor programs and services, ensure compliance with the rules of the program, and provide oversight in the expenditure of all funds, including identifying improper expenditures and undertaking fraud prevention and recovery efforts.

1.10.1 Identifying Improper Payments

Tribal Lead Agencies are required to describe effective internal controls to identify improper payments.

- a. Briefly describe how the Tribal Lead Agency's effective internal controls ensure integrity and accountability, including processes to ensure sound fiscal management (§98.68(a)). Describe: **The Fort Belknap Child Care Program follows the Fort Belknap Indian Community Financial Management Manual on allowable and disallowable cost. The Child Care Program for the FBIC cost allocation and procurement policies and procedures is also followed.**
- b. How does the Tribal Lead Agency prevent and identify improper payments (§98.68(b))? Check those that are included in the Tribe's policies and procedures:
 - i. Train staff on CCDF policies and regulations.
 - ii. Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.
 - iii. Share data with other programs (e.g., state CCDF program, Tribal or state TANF program, Head Start, CACFP, other Tribal offices).
 - iv. Run system reports that flag errors.
 - v. Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records.
 - vi. Review provider records.
 - vii. Perform ongoing monitoring and assessment of policy implementation.
 - viii. Train staff on Tribal procurement procedures.
 - ix. Inform families on allowable uses of Tribal CCDF funds.
 - x. Create a timeline for review of a family's presumptive eligibility determinations.
 - xi. Other. Briefly describe:

1.10.2 Investigating and Collecting Improper Payments

The Tribal Lead Agency is required to recover improper payments that are the result of fraud (§98.68(b)(2)). How does the Tribal Lead Agency investigate and collect improper payments resulting from fraud (intentional errors or program violations)? Check those that apply:

- a. Coordinate with and refer to other Tribal, state, or federal agencies (e.g., Tribal Council, law enforcement).
- b. Require recovery if the improper payment exceeds a specific dollar amount. Identify the minimum dollar amount: **\$20**

- c. Recover through repayment plans.
- d. Reduce payments in subsequent months.
- e. Recover through payroll deductions (i.e., for CCDF clients, providers, and staff employed by the Tribe).
- f. Other. Briefly describe: **In an effort to seek repayment, the Fort Belknap Child Care Program will review enrollment documents, attendance, provider and billing records. Perform bi-weekly monitoring and assessment of policy implementation to seek repayment of substantiated unintentional errors/program violations and may coordinate with other Tribal, State or Federal Agencies.**

1.11 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

(If the Tribal Lead Agency has a medium or large allocation, it is required to answer 1.11.1-1.11.3. Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations are only required to answer 1.11.3 and 1.11.1 and 1.11.2 are optional to answer.)

Tribal Lead Agencies with medium and large allocations are required to establish a Child Care Disaster Plan for the Tribal service area. The plan must be developed in consultation with relevant agencies and partners and must describe how it will address the needs of children, including the need for safe child care before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive for a major disaster or emergency (§98.16(dd) and as defined by Section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122).

Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations are not required to establish a Child Care Disaster Plan, but are required to include in its policies and procedures standards for disaster procedures including evacuation, relocation; shelter-in-place; lockdown; communication and reunification with families; continuity of operations; accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions; and conducting emergency preparedness training and practice drills for staff and volunteers.

1.11.1 Child Care Disaster Plan Collaboration

Did the Tribal Lead Agency collaborate with other agencies to develop the Child Care Disaster Plan, which may include other programs within the Tribal Lead Agency's governance structure, or any other partners identified by the Tribal Lead Agency (§98.16(dd)(1))? (e.g., Tribal or state emergency management agency, child care licensing agency, or health department):

Yes.

No. Briefly describe:

1.11.2 Child Care Disaster Plan Components

Does the Child Care Disaster Plan include the following required components (§98.16(dd)(2)):

a. Guidelines for the continuation of child care subsidies?

Yes.

No.

b. Guidelines for the continuation of child care services?

Yes.

No.

c. Procedures for the coordination of post-disaster recovery of child care services?

Yes.

No.

1.11.3 Child Care Disaster Plan Disaster Procedures

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify it has included in its Tribal CCDF Disaster Plan (or for small allocations, in its policies and procedures) standards for disaster procedures including evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place; lockdown; communication and reunification with families; continuity of operations; accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions; and conducting emergency preparedness training and practice drills for staff and volunteers (§98.41(a)(1)(vii))?

Yes.

No.

2 Health and Safety of Child Care Settings

Child care health and safety standards and enforcement practices are essential to protect the health and safety of children while out of their parents' care. CCDF provides a minimum threshold for child care health and safety policies and practices but leaves authority to Tribal Lead Agencies to design, adapt, or adopt standards that appropriately protect children's safety and promote nurturing environments that support their healthy growth and development. Tribal Lead Agencies should implement standards for ratios, group size limits, and provider qualifications that help ensure that the child care environment is conducive to safety and learning and enable caregivers to promote all domains of children's development. Health and safety standards should set clear and enforceable expectations for providers, set the foundation for health and safety training, and establish the baseline for monitoring and inspection.

In this section, a Tribal Lead Agency will describe its health and safety standards, pre-service or orientation training on health and safety, monitoring system(s), and its comprehensive background checks approach. Tribal Lead Agencies may adopt state health and safety standards, training, monitoring, and comprehensive background checks, or they may set their own. Tribal Lead Agencies have the flexibility to describe alternative monitoring and background check approaches and to provide justification(s) for the approach(es). Tribal Lead Agencies will be skipped out of questions if they are adopting state standards or practices.

2.1 Relative Providers

Tribal Lead Agencies can use relative providers in either family child care or in-home settings. If the Tribal Lead Agency utilizes relative providers in its CCDF program (defined in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act [42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.] as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles age 18 and over), the Tribal Lead Agency has the flexibility to determine exemptions for relative providers for health and safety standards, training, monitoring, and comprehensive background checks if the individual cares only for relative children.

Check the exemptions the Tribal Lead Agency has for eligible relative providers age 18 and over for the following health and safety requirements.

2.1.1 Relative Providers

Does the Tribal Lead Agency allow for relative providers?

No, the Tribal Lead Agency does not have relative providers. **(If checked, skip 2.1.2-2.1.6.)**

Yes. If Yes, please check the category of care the Tribal Lead Agency allows

- Family child care: Care is provided by relative in a private residence other than the child's residence.
- In-home child care: Care is provided by relative in the child's home.

2.1.2 Relative Providers Only

Does the Tribal Lead Agency **only** provide child care services utilizing relative providers?

Yes. **(If checked, skip 2.2-2.8.)**

No. **(If checked, skip 2.1.3-2.1.6.)**

2.1.3 Health and Safety Standards for Relative Providers

Tribal Lead Agencies that only have relative providers will complete information on standards in this question and will skip 2.2-2.3.

Select one of the two options:

Relative providers are exempt from all health and safety standard requirements.

Select the topical standards **required** for relative providers:

- a. The prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations). Describe:
- b. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and use of safe sleeping practices. Describe:
- c. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent. Describe:
- d. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions. Describe:
- e. Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic. Describe:
- f. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment. Describe:
- g. Emergency preparedness and response planning. Describe:
- h. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants. Describe:
- i. Appropriate precautions in transporting children. Describe:
- j. Pediatric first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Describe:
- k. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Describe:
- l. Other. Describe:

2.1.4 Health and Safety Training for Relative Providers

Tribal Lead Agencies that only have relative providers will complete information on training in this question and will skip 2.4-2.6.

Select one of the two options:

- Relative providers are exempt from all health and safety training requirements.
- Select the topical trainings **required** for relative providers in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period:

- a. The prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)
- b. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and use of safe sleeping practices
- c. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent
- d. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
- e. Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
- f. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment
- g. Emergency preparedness and response planning
- h. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants
- i. Appropriate precautions in transporting children
- j. Pediatric first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- k. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect
- l. Other: *Click or tap here to enter text.*

2.1.5 Monitoring and Enforcement for Relative Providers

Tribal Lead Agencies that only have relative providers will complete information on monitoring in this question and will skip 2.7-2.8.

Select one of the two options:

Relative providers are exempt from all monitoring and enforcement requirements.

Relative providers are not exempt from all monitoring and enforcement requirements. Describe:

2.1.6 Comprehensive Background Checks for Relative Providers

Select one of the two options:

Relative providers are exempt from all CCDF background check requirements. **(If checked, skip 2.9 and 2.11-2.17.)**

Relative providers are not exempt from all CCDF background check requirements.

2.2 Overview of Health and Safety Standards, Training, and Inspections

Use the check boxes below to indicate the health and safety standards (§98.41(a)), monitoring systems (§98.42(a); §98.42(b)), and comprehensive background check processes (§98.43(a)(1)) used by the Tribal Lead Agency for each category of care.

Note: For Tribal Lead Agencies that utilize both relative providers and nonrelative providers, Sections 2.2 through 2.11 questions apply to non-relative providers only. If multiple boxes are checked in a category of care, describe the combination.

2.2.1 Health and Safety Standards

- a. Check the health and safety standards that apply for center-based care, including Tribally operated centers:
 - i. Tribal health and safety standards
 - ii. State health and safety standards. State(s): **Montana**
 - iii. If both Tribal and state standards are checked, briefly describe how each type of standard is applied: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program, has adopted Caring For Our Children, 4th Edition, as our standards, however we have adopted the State of Montana's licensing standards for our off-reservation group home program.**
- b. Check the health and safety standards that apply for family child care (check all that apply):
 - i. Tribal health and safety standards
 - ii. State health and safety standards. State(s): **Montana**
 - iii. If both Tribal and state standards are checked, briefly describe how each type of standard is applied: **Off-reservation home providers will comply with the State of Montana's Family, Friends and Neighbors (FFN) licensing requirements. Family child care homes operating on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation will be given a tribal certificate.**
- c. Check the health and safety standards that apply for in-home care (check all that apply):
 - i. Tribal health and safety standards
 - ii. State health and safety standards. State(s):
 - iii. If both Tribal and state standards are checked, briefly describe how each type of standard is applied:

(If only 2.2.1a.ii, 2.2.1b.ii, and 2.2.1c.ii are checked, skip 2.3.1-2.6.3.)

2.2.2 Monitoring Systems

- a. Check the monitoring systems that apply for center-based care, including Tribally operated centers:
 - i. Tribal monitoring. List entity(ies): **The Fort Belknap Child Care Program Compliance Monitor & The Fort Belknap Sanitation Department**
 - ii. State monitoring. List entity(ies): **Montana State**
 - iii. If both Tribal and state monitoring are checked, briefly describe how each type of monitoring is applied: **Tribal -The Fort Belknap Child Care Program Compliance Monitor will monitor centers for compliance. The Fort Belknap Sanitation Department will do an initial inspection of the center and produce a sanitation report to the Fort Belknap CCDF Program and annually thereafter. The monitoring staff will conduct on-going monitoring throughout the year. State - Montana State will conduct annual monitoring of centers outside of the reservation and produce annual inspection certifications to the Fort Belknap CCDF Program.**
- b. Check the monitoring systems that apply for family child care (check all that apply):
 - i. Tribal monitoring. List monitoring entity(ies): **Tribal - Fort Belknap Child Care Program Compliance Monitor will monitor homes for initial compliance. Inspections will be twice per year, one announced and one unannounced. The monitor will conduct on-going compliance throughout the year. State - Family providers are not monitored by the State.**
 - ii. State monitoring. List monitoring entity(ies):
 - iii. If both Tribal and state monitoring are checked, briefly describe how each type of monitoring is applied:
- c. Check the monitoring systems that apply for in-home care:
 - i. Tribal monitoring. List monitoring entity(ies): **Fort Belknap Child Care Program Compliance Monitor will conduct an initial compliance check and a semi-annual inspection. The Compliance Monitor will conduct on-going compliance checks throughout the year.**
 - ii. State monitoring. List monitoring entity(ies):
 - iii. If both Tribal and state monitoring are checked, briefly describe how each type of monitoring is applied:

(If only 2.2.2a.ii, 2.2.2b.ii, and 2.2.2c.ii are checked, skip 2.7.1-2.8.3.)

2.2.3 Comprehensive Background Check Processes

- a. Does a state agency conduct all comprehensive background checks on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency for all center-based care, including Tribally operated centers?
 Yes. List the state(s): **Montana**
 No.
- b. Does a state agency conduct all comprehensive background checks on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency for all family child care?
 Yes. List the state(s): **Montana**
 No.
- c. Does a state agency conduct all comprehensive background checks on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency for all in-home child care?

Yes. List the state(s): **Montana**

No.

(If only 2.2.3a, 2.2.3b, and 2.2.3c are "Yes," skip 2.9 and 2.11-2.17.)

2.3 Health and Safety Standards and Pre-Service/Orientation Training

Tribal Lead Agencies are required to establish health and safety standards for all providers receiving CCDF funds relating to the topics listed below, as appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served (§98.41(a)). This requirement is applicable to all providers receiving CCDF program funds except for certain relatives, which may be exempted by the Tribal Lead Agency. Additionally, Tribal Lead Agencies must ensure caregivers, teachers, and directors are trained on health and safety standards either in pre-service training or within a three-month orientation period. Training must cover each of the required standards that address the health and safety requirements described in §98.41(a) and be appropriate to the provider setting and the age of children served.

In this section, the Tribal Lead Agency will describe health and safety standards that apply to all providers. A standard describes the actions that must be taken by child care providers to ensure the health and safety of children in care.

- In the first part of each health and safety topic, Tribal Lead Agencies must provide a brief summary or list of components for each standard and any variations based on the category of care and the ages of children served.
- In the second part of each health and safety topic, Tribal Lead Agencies must certify that the training topic is to be completed by providers either in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period.

2.3.1 Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (Including Immunizations)

- Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(i)): The CCDF Program has adopted the Caring for Our Children Basic Standards and recognizes the importance of standard precautions developed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in regards to procedures and preventative measures used to reduce the risk of infectious diseases. All of our enrolled children are required to update their immunization records prior to utilizing our program. The program has policies on the prevention and control of infectious diseases, a diaper changing policy, a hand washing policy, an oral hygiene policy, as well as routine cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection policies. Each provider is required to submit their updated immunization record and TB test results before entry into the CCDF Program. Each provider in our program will be trained on the prevention and control of infectious diseases.
- Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period? (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.
- Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it established a grace period (in consultation with the state or Tribal health agency (§98.41(a)(1)(i)(C))) that allows children experiencing homelessness to receive CCDF assistance while providing families with a reasonable time to take any necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements?

Yes.

No.

d. Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it established a grace period (in consultation with the state or Tribal health agency (§98.41(a)(1)(i)(C))) that allows children in foster care to receive CCDF assistance while providing families with a reasonable time to take any necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements?

Yes.
 No.

2.3.2 Prevention of SIDS and the Use of Safe Sleeping Practices

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(ii)): **The Fort Belknap Child Care Program requires that our providers be trained on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Safe Sleep Practices. The program has a Safe Sleep Policy that is distributed to all providers and potential providers of our program. We utilize the State of Montana's childcarenetwork.org website to provide these trainings. In addition to orientation to the Safe Sleep Policy, providers are required to complete the on-line training course within 30 days of entry to our program. Additionally, providers are required to place babies on his/her back at all times when sleeping, onto a firm, flat sleep surface. No bedding, crib bumpers or toys will be present in baby's sleep area. Baby's head or crib shall not be covered with blankets while asleep. Children must be in the view of the provider at all times.**

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.
 No.

2.3.3 Administration of Medication, Consistent with Standards for Parental Consent

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(iii)): **The Fort Belknap Child Care CCDF Program does not administer any type of medication. The implementation of medication administration pre-service training will be completed by October 1, 2025.**

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.
 No.

2.3.4 Prevention of and Response to Emergencies Due to Food and Allergic Reactions

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(iv)): **The CCDF Program shall have in place a procedure for responding to immediate medical emergencies, the procedures shall be posted and readily accessible. If any allergic reaction is observed, the parent and health care provider will be notified immediately. If life threatening, 911 will be called. Each child with a food or other allergy shall have a written care plan. Any child with food allergies will be identified and posted where food is being prepared and served. A detailed treatment plan will be readily available and implemented in the event of an allergic reaction.**

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.5 Safety of Building and Physical Premises

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(v)): **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program requires two annual home inspections, one announced and one unannounced. We inspect for posted plans in case of emergencies (escape routes, etc.), telephone numbers to local agencies in the event of emergencies and emergency contact information of each child. We inspect for child safety features such as guardrails/protective barriers, safety covers for electrical outlets, storage of toxic substances, fire extinguishers, fire and carbon monoxide detectors, safety of equipment and furnishings, children's play areas and cribs. The homes must have First Aid and emergency supplies. We inspect for pest infestation. There is a strict weapons policy, no transportation policy and water policy. Each provider is required to complete the "Protecting the Children from Harm" health and safety course that is offered online.**

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.6 Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child Maltreatment

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(vi)): **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program requires that our providers be trained on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Safe Sleep Practices. The program has a Safe Sleep Policy that is distributed to all providers and potential providers of our program. We utilize the State of Montana's childcaretraining.org website to provide these trainings. In addition to orientation of the Fort Belknap Child Care Safe Sleep Policy, providers are required to complete the online training course within 30 days of entry into our program. Online training implements the signs, symptoms, causes, prevention and long-term effects of Shaken Baby Syndrome and traumatic brain injury, abusive head trauma and child maltreatment. This training meets pre-service requirements and will also count towards annual required training hours. The training is thorough in the language of shaking or striking that pertains to injuries in children, and is also focused on addressing the suspicion of neglect or danger.**

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.7 Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(vii)): All providers shall have a plan and procedures in place for responding to a natural disaster or human-caused events. Providers will have in place written plans on emergency medical care, communication and drills to prepare children in case of emergencies.

Tribal CCDF providers will complete training in Emergency Preparedness and Planning for natural disasters and shelter-in-place policies. Providers will have readily accessible contact numbers for parents, emergency department numbers, emergency first aid kits and lists of children in their care with medical information relevant to each child (i.e.: allergies, medical diagnosis). Providers will have a daily sign-in sheet to account for all children in their care.

Evacuation Routes/Exits: All children are to be cared for on main level of center or house and are not permitted on second level or basement. Exits to include all windows and doors, are checked regularly to ensure opening.

-Classroom/Living Room: Front door and windows.

-Kitchen: Sliding doors and windows.

-Dining room/family room: front door and windows.

Relocation: Center based care will be relocated to the Sacred Heart Church, across the street from the Child Care Center. In home providers and children in their care will walk to the neighbor.

Lock down: Alert staff with pre-determined code word or phrase to signal lockdown (ensuring all staff can hear it, including those who may be outside), secure building, relocating children to their designated safe area, and notify proper authorities. Keep contact via mobile phones, radios or other communication methods to disseminate information and coordinate proper actions amongst staff. Inform parents of the lockdown as soon as it is safe to do so. Secure facility, locking all windows and doors. Move to a safe area. Take attendance for all children, staff or visitors to ensure everyone is safe and accounted for. Review and update plan bi-annually or as needed.

Volunteer emergency preparedness training: Bi-Annual trainings are conducted, to include disaster, fire safety practice drills, information on crisis management, collaborative planning with other groups and representatives. The provider will keep up to date contact forms of each child to be kept in mobile cribs, evacuation/emergency kits as well as the providers mobile phone. All providers will possess a evacuation and relocation kit to include: non-perishable food, water, diapering supplies, flashlight, batter powered radio, first aid kit, copies of child emergency forms, dietary/medication needs, toys and books to keep children occupied. It is the responsibility of the provider to maintain this kit and retrieve it during evacuation and relocation. This kit is to be stored in an easily accessible location.

Reunification with families: reunification with parents/guardians will be allowed once First Responders and the provider deems the situation as safe. The provider will notify only parents/guardians listed on children's forms, of a time and location to pick up children. The provider will also ask for proper identification from any individual picking up children.

Continuity of Operations: Normal operations may continue after the emergency has occurred and physical and emotional damage has been assessed and addressed to ensure the well being of both children and staff.

Accommodation of Infant and Toddlers: Children are to be evacuated together using a portable crib or play yard with wheels.

Accommodation of Children with Disabilities: Providers/Staff are to understand the nature of the

disaster and assess the needs for children with disabilities. Ensuring also that there is adequate medication (if necessary) on hand. Identify accommodations needed for children with disabilities. A list of medication, dosages and how to administer, a list of the special needs and medical diagnoses, any allergies, instructions on how to use medical equipment and/or assistive devices, insurance information, descriptions of child's triggers, likes, dislikes and any behavioral needs and contact information for parent/guardian and doctors.

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.8 Handling/Storage of Hazardous Materials and Appropriate Disposal of Biocontaminants

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(viii)): All hazardous materials and biological contaminants shall not be present where children can access them. Providers shall be trained in the use and disposal of toxic materials and biological contaminants.

Providers are required to attend training on the handling and disposal of toxic substances. All cleaning materials will be stored in a locked area and out of reach of children. All centers, group and in-home providers will be required to have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Providers will be educated regarding standard precautions when handling toxic materials and biological contaminants.

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.9 Precautions in Transporting Children

Does the Tribal Lead Agency permit providers to transport children?

No.

Yes. If yes, answer the following questions:

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(ix)):

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.10 Pediatric First Aid and Pediatric Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(x)): All Child Care providers will have successfully completed First-Aid/CPR and Infant First-Aid/CPR with official documentation in their personnel file. All providers will be required to complete First-Aid/CPR and Infant First-Aid/CPR prior to providing direct care to the children in our program.

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.11 Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

a. Describe the standard and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served (§98.41(a)(1)(xi)): The Fort Belknap Child Care Program is committed to safeguarding the well-being of the children entrusted to our care and have developed a Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting Policy. This policy addresses the obligation of reporting by the providers when they suspect that a child, who is in their care, may be a victim of child abuse. The policy addresses the steps providers will take in documenting and reporting suspected child abuse.
Providers will complete the online training on Child Abuse and Neglect offered through the State of Montana at www.childcaretraining.org.
Providers will document any changes in behavior, such as anxiety and becoming withdrawn, returning to early childhood behaviors (thumb sucking or bedwetting), fear of going home, unexplained injuries, poor hygiene or other forms of neglect, low self-esteem or being fearful. Documentation of such changes will be noted and reported to proper authorities.

b. Is this standard addressed in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.41(a)(2))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.12 Child Development

(If the Tribal Lead Agency has a small allocation, it is not required to answer this question.)

Certify that the Tribal Lead Agency requires providers to be trained on child development, the major domains of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, approaches to learning, and any variations based on category of care and/or ages of children served in a pre-service training or within a 90-day orientation period (§98.44 (b)(1)(iii))?

Yes.

No.

2.3.13 Additional Standards

In addition to the CCDF required health and safety standards, Tribal Lead Agencies may require providers to comply with additional standards such as those related to nutrition, access to physical activity, care for children with special needs, and any other topic determined to be relevant by the Tribal Lead Agency (§98.41(a)(1)(xii)).

Does the Tribal Lead Agency require providers to follow any health and safety standards in addition to

the CCDF-required health and safety topics?

Yes. Briefly describe (e.g., nutrition, access to physical activity, caring for children with special needs, or any other areas the Tribal Lead Agency requires providers to follow to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety): **All providers are required to take training courses that cover all ages. The Fort Belknap CCDF Program recognizes the need for quality child care services, therefore all providers are trained in all aspects and ages of development. The Fort Belknap CCDF Program uses www.childcaretraining.org and mtecp.org to meet the quality training goals of our program. Local individuals with knowledge of language and traditions are brought in to teach all children, 6 weeks through 12 years, the traditions and languages of our Tribes. Safe Sleep, How Boys & Girls Learn Differently, Fostering Critical Thinking Skills in Early Childhood, Pathway to Kindergarten, and Tune in to Temperament are a few examples of training offered to providers through www.childcaretraining.org, State of Montana, Family Connections offer our providers virtual and in-person training such as Using Intentionality when Planning for Children, Play is Learning and There's No Such Thing as Bad Weather. Each of these offered training modules enhance child development in cognitive, social, emotional and physical play. Providers are required to take 20 training hours per year and encouraged to attend as many as they wish.**

No.

2.4 Ongoing Training

Tribal Lead Agencies must have ongoing training requirements on health and safety for caregivers, teachers, and directors of programs receiving CCDF funds (§98.44(b)(2)).

2.4.1 Ongoing Training

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify that it has ongoing training requirements on health and safety for caregivers, teachers, and directors for all providers serving children participating in CCDF?

Yes.

No.

2.5 Staff/Child Ratios and Group Sizes

Tribal Lead Agencies must have standards for appropriate ratios between staff and children and appropriate group size limits for specific age populations. Tribal Lead Agencies must set requirements for qualifications for providers (§98.41(d)).

2.5.1 Age Classifications

Briefly describe how the Tribal Lead Agency defines the following age classifications:

- a. Infant. Briefly describe: **Infants age 6 weeks to 23 months.**
- b. Toddler. Briefly describe: **Toddler age 2 years to 3 years.**
- c. Preschool. Briefly describe: **Preschool age 3 years to 5 years.**
- d. School-Age. Briefly describe: **School-Age 6 years to 12 years.**

2.5.2 Center-Based Care Staff/Child Ratios and Group Sizes

For center-based care, including Tribally operated centers, provide the maximum staff/child ratio and group size for the settings and age groups below (§98.41(d)(1-2)):

- a. Infant
 - i. Ratio: **4:1**

- ii. Group Size: **8**
- b. Toddler
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **16**
- c. Preschool
 - i. Ratio: **10:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **20**
- d. School-Age
 - i. Ratio: **10:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **20**
- e. Mixed-Age Groups
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**

2.5.3 Family Child Care Staff/Child Ratios and Group Sizes

For family child care, provide the maximum staff/child ratio and group size for the settings and age groups below (§98.41(d)(1-2)):

- a. Infant
 - i. Ratio: **4:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **4**
- b. Toddler
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- c. Preschool
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- d. School-Age
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- e. Mixed-Age Groups
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**

2.5.4 In-Home Care Staff/Child Ratios and Group Sizes

For in-home care, provide the maximum staff/child ratio and group size for the settings and age groups below (§98.41(d)(1-2)):

- a. Infant
 - i. Ratio: **4:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **4**
- b. Toddler
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- c. Preschool
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- d. School-Age
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**
- e. Mixed-Age Groups
 - i. Ratio: **6:1**
 - ii. Group Size: **6**

2.6 Provider Qualifications

Describe the provider qualifications for each of the Tribal Lead Agency's categories of care (§98.41(d)(3)).

2.6.1 Center-Based Care (including Tribally Operated Centers)

Briefly describe provider (caregiver, teacher, etc.) minimum qualifications: **Will possess a minimum of two years working experience in an early learning environment, possess and educational equivalent or possess equivalent child care qualifications. Must complete all health and safety requirements and participate in ongoing professional development training.**

2.6.2 Family Child Care

Briefly describe provider (director, caregiver, teacher, etc.) minimum qualifications: **Complete all health and safety requirements and must participate in on-going professional development training offered by the program.**

2.6.3 In-Home Care

Briefly describe provider (caregiver, teacher, etc.) minimum qualifications: **Must have completed all heath and safety requirements and participate in on-going professional development training offered by the program. Provider will care for one family. Providers own children will count in the provider/child ratio.**

2.7 Monitoring and Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Tribal Lead Agencies must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with all applicable CCDF and Tribal health and safety requirements.

This certification may include, but is not limited to, any systems used to ensure that providers meet health and safety requirements, any documentation required to be maintained by child care providers, and any other monitoring procedures to ensure compliance. Tribal Lead Agencies are subject to the provision at §98.42(b)(2) to require inspections of child care providers and facilities that receive CCDF program funds.

Note: All relative provider information is entered in Section 2.1.

2.7.1 Annual Inspections

Briefly describe the Tribal Lead Agency's policies for annual inspections of CCDF providers for compliance with 1) health and safety and 2) fire safety requirements for the following categories of care (§98.42(b)(2)(ii)):

- a. Center-based child care, including Tribally operated centers. Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program will team with the Fort Belknap Indian Health Service Sanitation Department and the Fort Belknap Environmental Department to conduct annual inspections of the CCDF centers for compliance. A certificate of the inspection will be provided to the Fort Belknap CCDF Program.**
- b. Family child care. Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program Compliance Monitor will conduct an initial inspection and semi-annually thereafter. There will be two inspections per year, one announce and one unannounced. The Compliance Monitor will monitor the home throughout the year to ensure Family Child Care Providers are in compliance.**
- c. In-home care. Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Compliance Monitor will conduct an initial inspection. The Compliance Monitor will monitor the home throughout the year.**

2.7.2 Alternative Approach to Inspection Requirements

Does the Tribal Lead Agency use an optional alternative approach to the inspection requirements (§98.83(d))?

Yes. Briefly describe the alternative monitoring approach to the inspections requirements and how it is comprehensive and protects the health and safety of children in care:

No.

2.8 Monitoring Inspectors

Tribal Lead Agencies must ensure individuals who are hired as inspectors or monitors are qualified to inspect child care providers and facilities and have received health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served. Training shall include, but is not limited to, those requirements described in §98.41(a)(1) and all aspects of the requirements detailed in Sections 2.3 and 2.4. Tribal Lead Agencies must also ensure the ratio of inspectors or monitors to child care providers and facilities is maintained at a level sufficient to conduct effective inspections of child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Tribal, federal, state, and local laws.

2.8.1 Qualifications for Inspectors or Monitors to Inspect Facilities and Providers

Does the Tribal Lead Agency have policies that ensure individuals who inspect child care facilities have the expertise, experience, or education, as determined by the Tribal Lead Agency, to comprehensively conduct inspections to protect the health and safety of children in care (§98.42(b)(1))?

Yes.

No.

2.8.2 Inspectors or Monitors Training on Health and Safety Requirements

Does the Tribal Lead Agency train inspectors or monitors on health and safety requirements that are appropriate to the age of the children in care and the type of provider setting (§98.42(b)(1))?

Yes.

No.

2.8.3 Ratio of Inspectors or Monitors to Child Care Providers

Does the Tribal Lead Agency have policies to ensure the ratio of inspectors to child care providers and facilities is maintained at a level sufficient to enable the Tribe to conduct effective inspections on a timely basis (§98.42(b)(3))?

Yes.

No.

2.9 Comprehensive Background Checks

All Tribal Lead Agencies are required to conduct comprehensive background checks for employed and prospective staff members of all child care programs eligible to deliver CCDF services.

Comprehensive background checks must include three in-state checks, two national checks, and three interstate checks if the individual lived in another state or territory in the preceding five years. The background check components must be completed at least once every five years.

A Tribal Lead Agency may choose to conduct comprehensive background checks itself, partner with one or more states to complete the checks, or use alternative approaches.

Tribes may propose an alternative approach for assessing criminal history, sex offender status, and child abuse and neglect history. The alternative approach is subject to ACF approval, and ACF will not approve approaches with blanket exemptions that bypass the intent of protecting children's safety.

For the following categories of care, select the methods the Tribal Lead Agency uses to meet the comprehensive background check requirements. If using alternative approaches, the Tribal Lead Agency must describe how the alternative approaches selected are comprehensive and ensure the health and safety of children in child care in 2.17.

Note: Relative provider background check methods are described in Section 2.1 (§98.16(o); §98.43(b); §98.83(d)(3); §98.83(f)(3)).

2.9.1 Comprehensive Background Checks for Center-Based Care

Choose the method for conducting each of the eight components the Tribal Lead Agency uses for center-based care, including Tribally operated centers.

- a. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):
 - i. State agency conducts a criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, briefly describe how each method is utilized:
- b. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized
- c. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- d. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check (§98.43(b)(1)):
 - i. State agency conducts an FBI fingerprint check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the FBI NGI System (a P.L. 92-544 state statute or a state's discretion under the NCPA/VCA)
 - iii. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Tribal Access Program (TAP)
 - iv. FBI-approved channeler

- v. Hard copy fingerprint cards mailed to the FBI
- vi. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- vii. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- e. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) name-based search (§98.43(b)(2)):
 - i. State agency conducts an NCIC NSOR check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the NCIC NSOR name-based records
 - iii. Alternative approach: FBI fingerprint check (which includes an automatic check of the NCIC NSOR fingerprint records)
 - iv. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - v. Alternative approach: Private or public sex offender registry. Describe:
 - vi. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- f. Criminal registry or repository in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):
 - i. State agency conducts criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- g. Sex offender registry or repository check in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- h. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the previous state of registry (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):
 - i. State agency conducts child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:

- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

2.9.2 Comprehensive Background Checks for Family Child Care

Choose the method the Tribal Lead Agency uses for conducting each of the eight components for family child care:

The Tribal Lead Agency uses the same approach for comprehensive background checks as listed for center-based care as listed in 2.9.1. **(If checked, skip 2.9.2a-h.)**

The Tribal Lead Agency uses a different approach for comprehensive background checks for family child care as listed in 2.9.1.

- a. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):
 - i. State agency conducts a criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- b. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- c. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- d. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check (§98.43(b)(1)):

- i. State agency conducts an FBI fingerprint check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the FBI NGI System (a P.L. 92-544 state statute or a state's discretion under the NCPA/VCA)
- iii. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Tribal Access Program (TAP)
- iv. FBI-approved channeler
- v. Hard copy fingerprint cards mailed to the FBI
- vi. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- vii. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:

e. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) name-based search (§98.43(b)(2)):

- i. State agency conducts an NCIC NSOR check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the NCIC NSOR name-based records
- iii. Alternative approach: FBI fingerprint check (which includes an automatic check of the NCIC NSOR fingerprint records)
- iv. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- v. Alternative approach: Private or public sex offender registry. Describe:
- vi. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:

f. Criminal registry or repository in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):

- i. State agency conducts a criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

g. Sex offender registry or repository check in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):

- i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

h. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the previous state of registry (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):

- i. State agency conducts a child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

2.9.3 Comprehensive Background Checks for In-Home Care

Choose the method for conducting each of the eight components the Tribal Lead Agency uses for in-home child care:

The Tribal Lead Agency uses the same approach for comprehensive background checks for in-home care as listed in 2.9.1 or 2.9.2: **(If checked, skip 2.9.3a-h.)**

Center-based care

Family child care

The Tribal Lead Agency uses a different approach for comprehensive background checks for in-home care as listed in 2.9.1 or 2.9.2.

- a. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):
 - i. State agency conducts a criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- b. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
 - ii. Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
 - iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
 - iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
 - v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
 - vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:
- c. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):
 - i. State agency conducts a child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency

- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

d. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check (§98.43(b)(1)):

- i. State agency conducts an FBI fingerprint check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the FBI NGI System (a P.L. 92-544 state statute or a state's discretion under the NCPA/VCA)
- iii. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Tribal Access Program (TAP)
- iv. FBI-approved channeler
- v. Hard copy fingerprint cards mailed to the FBI
- vi. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- vii. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:

e. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) name-based search (§98.43(b)(2)):

- i. State agency conducts an NCIC NSOR check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses a state's access to the NCIC NSOR name-based records
- iii. Alternative approach: FBI fingerprint check (which includes an automatic check of the NCIC NSOR fingerprint records)
- iv. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- v. Alternative approach: Private or public sex offender registry. Describe:
- vi. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:

f. Criminal registry or repository in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(i)):

- i. State agency conducts a criminal history check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state criminal registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

g. Sex offender registry or repository check in the previous state of residency (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(ii)):

- i. State agency conducts a sex offender registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state sex offender registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):

- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

h. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the previous state of registry (in the past five years) (§98.43(b)(3)(iii)):

- i. State agency conducts a child abuse and neglect registry check on behalf of the Tribal Lead Agency
- ii. The Tribal Lead Agency uses access to a state child abuse and neglect registry or repository. It submits and receives information. List the state(s):
- iii. Alternative approach: Third-party vendor
- iv. Alternative approach: Tribal database or repository. Briefly describe:
- v. Alternative approach: Other. Describe:
- vi. If two or more methods are checked, describe how each method is utilized:

2.10 Comprehensive Background Checks for Household Members in Family Child Care

(If the Tribal Lead Agency offers family child care, it is required to complete this section.)

For family child care, the comprehensive background check requirement includes the caregiver and household members (i.e., any other adults residing in the family home child care who are age 18 or older). ACF recognizes that completing all eight comprehensive background checks for household members may be burdensome for Tribes and will consider an alternative approach of at least one background check or completing some of the required checks. Tribal Lead Agencies who use this alternative approach must indicate which background checks apply to household members and must justify the alternative approach in section 2.17 (§98.43(a)(2)(ii)(C)).

2.10.1 Comprehensive Background Checks for Household Members

What comprehensive background check components are required for family child care household members over 18 years of age?

All eight required components are required using the methods listed in 2.9.2 for family child care.

An alternative approach to what is listed in 2.9.2 that includes a combination of the following components. Check those that apply:

- a. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency
- b. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency
- c. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency
- d. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check
- e. National Crime Information Center National Sex Offender Registry (NCIC NSOR) name-based search
- f. Criminal registry or repository in the previous state of residency (in the past five years)
- g. Sex offender registry or repository check in the previous state of residency (in the past five years)
- h. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the previous state of residency (in the past five years)

2.11 Disqualifying Crimes for Employment Eligibility

The Tribal Lead Agency must determine child care staff members (including prospective child care staff members) ineligible for employment or to deliver services if convicted of a felony for any of the following crimes specified in §98.43(c)(1)(iv): murder, child abuse or neglect, a crime against children, including child pornography, spousal abuse, a crime involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, a drug-related offense committed during the preceding five years, or has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, and sexual assault, or of any misdemeanor involving child pornography.

The Tribal Lead Agency must also determine a child care staff member or prospective child care staff member **ineligible** for employment for any components in §98.43(c)(1)(i) through §98.43(c)(1)(iii):

- refuses to consent to a background check,
- knowingly makes materially false statements in connection with the background check, or
- is registered, or is required to be registered, on the state/territory sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR).

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only uses state systems for comprehensive background checks, it is not required to complete this section.)

2.11.1 Disqualifying Crimes for Employment Eligibility

- Does the Tribal Lead Agency determine child care staff members or prospective child care staff members **ineligible** for child care employment or to deliver services based on conviction for crimes and other factors listed in §98.43(c)(1)?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- Does the Tribal Lead Agency have additional crimes for which it determines individuals **ineligible** for child care employment or to deliver services?
[] Yes. List additional disqualifying crimes:
[] No.
- Does the Tribal Lead Agency use an alternative approach that implements less than a lifetime ban for offenses that are not crimes against children?
[] Yes. Briefly describe the alternative approach:
[] No.

2.11.2 Felony Drug Offense Review Process

Does the Tribal Lead Agency have a review process for a felony drug offense committed within the preceding five years to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment (§98.43(e)(4))?

[] Yes. Briefly describe:
[] No.

2.12 Fees

The Tribal Lead Agency may not charge fees that exceed the actual costs of processing applications and administering a comprehensive background check, regardless of whether the checks are conducted by the Tribe, a state, or a third-party vendor or contractor.

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only uses state systems for comprehensive background checks, it is not required to answer this section.)

2.12.1 Fees

Does the Tribal Lead Agency ensure that fees charged for completing the background check reflect the actual cost of processing and administration (§98.43(f))?

Yes.

No. If no, briefly describe the cost to the Tribal Lead Agency of processing and administering the background check and the amount charged to the applicant:

Not applicable. The Tribal Lead Agency does not charge fees for background checks.

2.13 Timeliness in Returning Employment Determination Results

The Tribal Lead Agency must conduct comprehensive background checks as quickly as possible and provide employment determination results to the provider and to the current or prospective staff member within 45 days after the provider submitted the request. The request must be submitted prior to when the individual becomes a staff member and must be completed at least once every five years (§98.43(d)(2)(ii)).

Tribal Lead Agencies have the flexibility to make employment determination decisions for provisional hires if not all background check components are completed within 45 days.

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only uses state systems for comprehensive background checks, it is not required to answer this section.)

2.13.1 Timeliness in Returning Employment Determination Results

Does the Tribal Lead Agency provide employment determination results to the provider and current or prospective staff member within 45 days (§98.43(e)(1))?

Yes.

No, there are barriers in providing employment determination results within 45 days. Describe the barriers:

No, the Tribal Lead Agency proposes an alternative approach to providing employment determination results within 45 days. Describe the alternative approach:

2.13.2 Renewal of the Comprehensive Background Check

Does the Tribal Lead Agency conduct the comprehensive background check at least every five years for all required components for all applicable categories of care (§98.43(d)(2)(ii))?

Yes.

No.

2.14 Provisional Hire

Before prospective staff members may provide services or be near children, Tribal Lead Agencies must receive a qualifying result for either the FBI criminal background check or a fingerprint-based in-state criminal background check where the individual lives. Until all the background check components have been completed, the prospective staff member must be supervised at all times by someone who has already received a qualifying result on a background check within the past five years.

2.14.1 Provisional Hire

Does the Tribal Lead Agency allow a provisional hire to begin work before a qualifying result from an FBI fingerprint criminal check or an in-state fingerprint-based criminal history check (§98.43(d)(4))?

No.

Yes. If yes, answer the following questions:

- a. Does the Tribal Lead Agency require a qualifying result from the FBI fingerprint check or state/Tribal criminal checks before a provisional hire begins work with children?

Yes.

No.

No, proposing an alternative approach. Describe the alternative approach: .

- b. Does the Tribal Lead Agency require a provisional hire to be supervised by staff with a qualifying result for the comprehensive background check while awaiting results from all components of the comprehensive background check?

Yes.

No.

No, proposing an alternative approach. Describe the alternative approach: .

2.15 Privacy of Comprehensive Background Check Results

Tribal Lead Agencies must ensure privacy by providing the results of the background check to the child care provider (i.e., employer) in a statement that only indicates whether a child care staff member (including staff member, prospective staff member, or household member) is eligible or ineligible for employment, without revealing any detailed information of criminal history, disqualifying crimes, or other related information regarding the individual. The Tribal Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. It may release aggregated data by crime as long as the data does not include personally identifiable information (§98.43(e)(2)(iii)). ACF will consider alternative approaches that allow some information to be shared with the child care provider.

Note: This provision is subject to limitations in FBI policy and state or Tribal privacy requirements, which may prevent the release of information. Tribal Lead Agencies must justify any alternative approach.

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only uses state systems for comprehensive background checks, it is not required to answer this section.)

2.15.1 Privacy of Comprehensive Background Check Results

Does the Tribal Lead Agency certify it provides employment determination results to the provider without revealing any specific/detailed criminal history about the child care staff member (including staff member, prospective staff member, or household member) (§98.43(e)(2)(i))?

Yes.

No. Describe the alternative approach:

2.16 Appeals for Child Care Staff

Tribal Lead Agencies must have a process that allows an individual (including staff member, child care staff member, prospective staff member, or household member) to appeal the results of a background check to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the individual's background check report.

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only uses state systems for comprehensive background checks, it is not required to answer this section.)

2.16.1 Appeals Process

Does the appeals process:

- a. Provide the affected individual with information in writing related to each disqualifying crime in a report, along with information/notice on the opportunity to appeal (§98.43(e)(2)(ii))?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- b. Provide the affected individual with clear instructions about how to complete the appeals process for each background check component if the individual wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such individual's background check report (§98.43(e)(3)(ii))?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- c. Ensure the Tribal Lead Agency attempts to verify the accuracy of the information challenged by the individual, including making an effort to locate any missing disposition information related to the disqualifying crime (§98.43(e)(3)(iii))?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- d. Get completed in a timely manner (§98.43(e)(3)(iv))?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- e. Ensure the affected individual receives written notice of the decision (§98.43(e)(3)(v))?
[] Yes.
[] No.
- f. In the case of a negative determination, the decision must indicate (1) the Tribal Lead Agency's efforts to verify the accuracy of information challenged by the individual, (2) any additional appeals rights available to the individual, and (3) information on how the individual can correct records at issue in the case (§98.43(e)(3)(v))?
[] Yes.
[] No.

2.17 Justification for Alternative Approaches

(If the Tribal Lead Agency only checks preapproved methods in 2.9-2.15, it is not required to answer 2.17.1-2.17.2.)

Tribal Lead Agencies may use alternative approaches to complete all eight of the comprehensive background checks (Plan question 2.9); the implementation of less than lifetime bans for offenses that are not crimes against children (2.11); the policies that allow longer than 45 days to conduct comprehensive background checks (2.13); provisional hire (2.14); or any private information shared with the child care provider (i.e., employer) (2.15), as applicable.

OCC will consider alternative approaches in cases where the Tribe does not have authority or access to conduct a particular component of the check, particularly in cases where staff are not Tribal employees (e.g., staff of family child care providers or center-based providers receiving vouchers/certificates).

In the question below, describe how the alternative approach(es) selected in Plan questions 2.9-2.16 are comprehensive and ensure the health and safety of children in child care, as applicable.

2.17.1 Barriers in Completing CCDF Background Checks

What are the issues or barriers in completing the required CCDF background checks using approved methods? Check those that apply:

- Does not have the authority under the CCDF statute to conduct a NCIC NSOR name-based search.
- No direct authority under the CCDF statute to conduct an FBI fingerprint check.
- No existing formal or informal MOU or MOA with a state to access criminal or child abuse databases for CCDF purposes.
- Other. Describe:

2.17.2 Justification for Alternative Approaches

Describe how the alternative approach(es) in Plan questions 2.10-2.15 are comprehensive and ensure the health and safety of children in child care:

3 Quality Improvement

The quality of child care affects children's safety and healthy development while in care settings, and high-quality child care can be foundational across the lifespan of a child. Tribal CCDF quality funds can be used in a broad variety of ways to improve the quality of child care for all children in care, including for culturally relevant activities, to meet the unique needs of Tribal children, families, and communities. Tribal Lead Agencies may use CCDF for quality improvement activities for all Indian children in care in the defined service area, not just those receiving child care subsidies.

Required Minimum for Quality Spending		
	Tribal Lead Agencies with Small Allocations	Tribal Lead Agencies with Medium and Large Allocations
Quality Set-Aside*	9%	9%
Infant-Toddler*	NA	3%
Total Quality*	9%	12%

*Does not apply to discretionary base amount.

3.1 Quality Activities Needs Assessment Methodology

3.1.1 Quality Activities Needs Assessment Methodology

How did the Tribal Lead Agency assess needs to identify goals and activities to improve quality? Check those that apply:

- a. Parent, family, community, or Tribal meetings
- b. Self-assessments
- c. Surveys to families, providers, and Tribal leadership
- d. Site visits and/or monitoring inspection visits
- e. Community assessments
- f. Other. Describe:

3.2 Quality Improvement Goals and Activities

CCDF quality set-aside funds must be used on *at least one of ten quality improvement activities* described in CCDF regulations and may include supporting preservation and revitalization of Indigenous language and culture in child care programs. The quality activities must be aligned with the Tribal Lead Agency's assessment of the service area's need to carry out such services and care. The Tribal Lead Agency may describe activities currently underway, planned, or expected during the three-year Plan period (§98.53(a)).

3.2.1 Quality Improvement Activities

Identify the Tribal Lead Agency's plans to spend CCDF funds for selected quality improvement activities. Check at least one quality activity:

- a. **[x] Training and Professional Development:** This category supports the training and professional development of the child care workforce. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund training for required health and safety training topics, language and literacy, promotion of child development, family engagement, implementation of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive instruction, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Tribal Lead Agency must develop training and professional development requirements, including pre-service or orientation training (to be completed within three months) and ongoing requirements designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce.**

- b. **[x] Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines:** This category supports developing, maintaining, or implementing early learning and developmental guidelines. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund staff trainings on child development and early learning guidelines, use of the state's early learning guidelines, development or implementation of the Tribal Lead Agency's own Tribally specific guidelines, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program will work with the State of Montana in the development of Tribal specific training topics which will include Native American Providers.**

- c. **[x] Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS):** This category supports developing, implementing, or enhancing a quality improvement system. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund participation in a state QRIS, collaboration with other Tribes to implement a QRIS or similar rating system, development of a Tribal QRIS or similar rating system, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program will partner with the Fort Belknap Head Start Program and utilize the Head Start Education Manager in accessing and rating the quality improvement of our child care providers. The Education Manager will set up standards of care that would improve the program's performance standards.**

- d. **[x] Supply and Quality of Services for Infants and Toddlers:** This category supports improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund training and professional development to enhance child care providers' abilities to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers, Indigenous language and culturally responsive practices for infants and toddlers, transparent and easy-to-understand consumer information about high-quality infant-toddler care that includes information on infant-toddler language, social-emotional, and early literacy and numeracy cognitive development, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program will implement the practice of Indigenous languages and culturally responsive practices for infants and toddlers.**

e. **[x] Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Services:** This category supports establishing or expanding a system of CCR&R services. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund partnerships with other Tribes to offer CCR&R services, incorporation of CCR&R services into the family intake process, use of a state CCR&R, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program caregivers are signed up with the State of Montana Early Learning Project to assist with improving and expanding their programs. Incoming Providers will be assisted in creating their profile with the Early Learning Project.**

f. **[x] Licensing, Inspection, Monitoring, Training, Health, and Safety:** This category supports facilitating compliance with Tribal child care licensing, monitoring, inspection, and health and safety standards. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could fund health and safety materials/equipment (e.g., carbon monoxide detectors, fencing, personal protective equipment), classroom materials and resources, conducting monitoring visits of child care providers, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program will provide health and safety equipment for Child Care Providers, such as carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, PPE, cleaning products, baby gates, fencing, etc.**

g. **[x] Evaluating the Quality of Child Care Programs:** This category supports evaluating the quality of child care programs, including how programs positively impact children. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could purchase quality assessment tools, implement surveys to collect provider or family input, conduct internal training on the use of quality evaluations, or more.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program constantly monitors the success of child care programs and send providers to training that will positively impact the children in their care. The Fort Belknap CCDF Program uses the Early Childhood Project website in determining the needs of our providers. Providers are required to register on this website which will also track their training hours and professional development needs. The Fort Belknap CCDF Center Manager will monitor the training needs of our program and evaluate the programs quality.**

h. **[] Supporting Providers in the Voluntary Pursuit of Accreditation:** This category supports accreditation by an accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could use accreditation guidelines as a quality measure, fund any aspect of national accreditation (e.g., accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children or National Association for Family Child Care, or accreditation developed by a Tribal association), pay annual accreditation fees, or more.

Briefly describe:

i. **[x] High-Quality Program Standards:** This category supports Tribal or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could use Minimum Health and Safety Standards: A Guide for American Indian and Alaska Native CCDF Grantees, Caring for Our Children, Head Start Program Performance Standards, or more to develop or adopt high-quality program standards.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program uses the newly published CCDF Standards, Stepping Stones Caring for Our Children and Caring for Our Children basics as guides in the development of high quality care. The Fort Belknap CCDF will also consult with the Fort Belknap Head Start and Early Head Start Programs on the care of their children and the criteria used for high quality care.**

j. **[x] Other Measurable Quality Improvement Activities:** This category supports other activities the Tribal Lead Agency will engage in to improve the quality of child care services and the measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry, including culturally relevant quality activities. For example, the Tribal Lead Agency could incorporate Tribal language into child care settings, offer culturally based training opportunities for families and providers, serve traditional Indigenous foods in child care programs, fund written materials, including newsletters, brochures, and checklists on child care topics, develop or participate in the Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI), or more. For more information about TELI, see Appendix 2.

Briefly describe: **The Fort Belknap CCDF Program realizes the need for culturally appropriate provider training and is endeavoring to provide the much needed training and classroom curriculum that will reflect tribal culture. The Fort Belknap CCDF Program is working with the Fort Belknap language instructors and the State of Montana in developing training and cultural diversity information for all providers.**

PART II: TRIBAL LEAD AGENCIES WITH SMALL ALLOCATIONS

4 Direct Services

Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations do not have to offer direct services to children, but CCDF funds must be used in alignment with the goals and purpose of CCDF (§98.1). If the Tribal Lead Agency chooses to offer direct services, it is exempt from requirements listed in Section 5: Child and Family Eligibility, Enrollment, and Continuity of Care, Section 6: Equal Access, and Section 7: Family Outreach and Consumer Education, but not from the requirements listed in §98.83(f).

4.1 Direct Child Care Services

4.1.1 Direct Child Care Services

Indicate if the Tribal Lead Agency will offer direct child care services.

Check the appropriate box below:

Yes. The Tribal Lead Agency will offer direct child care services.

No. The Tribal Lead Agency will not offer direct child care services. If no, this concludes the abbreviated CCDF Plan for Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations.

(If "No" is checked, skip 4.2.1-4.4.1. The application is complete.)

4.2 Direct Child Care Funding Methods

4.2.1 Funding Methods

How does the Tribal Lead Agency provide direct child care services? Check those that apply:

- a. Certificates and vouchers
- b. Grants or contracts with approved child care providers (e.g., the Tribal Lead Agency uses grants or contracts for child care slots to increase the supply and prioritize children in underserved areas, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities [as defined by the Tribal Lead Agency], and children who receive care during nontraditional hours and/or to improve quality of child care programs)
- c. Operational costs for a Tribally operated center. *Note: A Tribally operated center is a center owned and operated by a Tribe that delivers all or part of the Tribe's child care services funded by CCDF.* Does the Tribal Lead Agency provide child care services exclusively through one or more Tribally operated centers?

Yes.

No.

4.3 Eligibility Criteria

Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations who choose to provide direct child care services must at a minimum, limit eligibility to Indian children (as defined in Plan question 1.1.1) residing in the defined service area (as defined in Plan question 1.2.1). If the Tribal Lead Agencies have additional eligibility criteria, please describe below.

4.3.1 Eligibility Criteria

Describe the Tribal Lead Agency's eligibility criteria: **No further eligibility criteria is required.**

4.4 Payment Rates

(If "Yes" is checked in 4.2.1c, the Tribal Lead Agency is not required to answer this question.)

4.4.1 Provider Payments

Describe how the Tribal Lead Agency sets payment rates for each provider type: **Payment rates are as follows:**

Special Needs Child (any age): Half a day - \$28 (0-5 hours), Full day - \$40 (6-9 hours)

Infant Toddler (ages 0-2): Half a day - \$38 (0-5 hours), Full day - \$50 (6-9 hours)

Pre-School (ages 3-5): Half a day - \$20 (0-5 hours), Full day - \$30 (6-9 hours)

School Age (ages 5-12): Half a day - \$19 (0-5 hours), Full day - \$28 (6-9 hours)

These rates coincide with the State of Montana rates for Child Care.

Payments are issued bi-weekly via check after a timesheet is submitted.

The abbreviated CCDF plan for Tribal Lead Agencies with small allocations ends here.

(CARS ends the application.)

Appendix 2: Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI)

Tribal Lead Agencies are not required to complete this appendix.

One way for Tribal Lead Agencies to coordinate the delivery of CCDF with other early childhood partners is through the Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI) as a Collaborative or Network participant. The TELI Collaborative is an **optional** intensive technical assistance opportunity for up to eight Tribal Lead Agencies. Information on participating in the TELI Collaborative can be found on the [Tribal Early Learning Initiative](#) website.

The TELI Network is an **optional** opportunity for all Tribal Lead Agencies to receive universal technical assistance in developing and strengthening Tribal early childhood systems. Network participants will have access to the resources developed for, by, and shared with TELI Collaborative Teams. **This Appendix provides an opportunity to indicate interest in participation in the TELI Network.**

TELI Network

Are you interested in participating in the TELI Network?

Yes.

No.