

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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POLICY GUIDE 2000.10

Reimbursement of Private Agency Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children (COA) Accreditation Costs

DATE: September 15, 2000

TO: Rules and Procedures Bookholders, DCFS and Purchase of Service Agency Child Welfare Staff

FROM: Jess McDonald, Director

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue new procedures for private agencies to follow when requesting reimbursement for Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children (COA) accreditation costs.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are Quality Assurance, Contract Administration, Agency Performance, Purchase of Service (POS) Monitoring, Business Office and Administrative Service staff of the Department and purchase of service agencies with foster care contracts (traditional, relative, specialized and treatment).

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Department agreed to reimburse COA accreditation costs to child welfare agencies providing foster care that become accredited or are reaccredited on or after July 1, 1999. This is due to the Department's standard that all child welfare agencies providing foster care must be accredited.

If a private agency has another program(s) accredited by either the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) or the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the private agency can pursue accreditation of their foster care programs(s) through that same accrediting agency without DCFS reimbursement. **However, DCFS will ONLY reimburse COA accreditation/reaccreditation costs.**

IV. KEY WORDS

Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children (COA), accreditation, reimbursement, reaccreditation, private agency, accreditation costs.

V. ACCREDITATION/REACCREDITATION REIMBURSEMENT PROTOCOL

DCFS will reimburse the cost of accreditation surveys conducted by the Council on Accreditation (COA) up to the limits in the schedule of accreditation costs provided by COA.

- DCFS will reimburse a private agency for the costs of accreditation AFTER the private agency has received accreditation certification from the COA. The effective month/year of the accreditation must be on or after July 1999. Accreditation costs refer to the application fee, accreditation fee (financial agreement with COA) and the site visit charge.
- After the agency has become accredited, the agency may submit a request for reimbursement of accreditation costs. The request should be in the form of a written letter to DCFS with a copy of the accreditation certification letter from COA and a copy of the billing from COA. DCFS will review the request to ensure the appropriate documentation is attached and the costs fall within the COA schedule of accreditation costs. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted to:

Manager
DCFS Office of Contract Administration
406 East Monroe, Mail Station 455
Springfield, Illinois 62701

- Reimbursement for the accreditation survey costs will be paid under **Type Service Code 0134 - Accreditation Survey Costs Reimbursement**.

DCFS will also reimburse the private agency for the COA application fee, accreditation fee (financial agreement with COA) and the site visit charge if the private agency is a provisional or full member of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and CWLA reimburses the private agency or pays these costs on behalf of the private agency. The private agency must submit to DCFS the COA invoice paid by CWLA on behalf of the agency along with the COA accreditation certification letter.

Site Preparatory and Corrective Action Costs

DCFS will provide reimbursement for preparatory costs and the costs of correcting deficient standards identified in a COA accreditation survey, **up to a maximum amount equal to the total of the application fee, accreditation fee and site visit costs**. For example:

If the application fee is \$600, the accreditation fee is \$9,400 and the site visit costs are \$4,800, DCFS will reimburse the private agency \$14,800 under Type Service Code 0134 - Accreditation Survey Costs Reimbursement. The ceiling for matching preparatory and corrective action costs would then be \$14,800.

To receive reimbursement for corrective action costs, the private agency must submit:

- the original accreditation survey findings;
- the private agency's corrective action plan;
- documentation (i.e., invoices, etc.) to support the costs incurred; and
- a copy of the COA accreditation certification letter.

For site preparatory costs, appropriate documentation to support the costs incurred plus proof of accreditation are required.

- Providers need to clearly distinguish between reimbursements for survey costs versus reimbursement for corrective action or site preparatory costs.

Reimbursement for preparatory and corrective action costs will only be made AFTER the agency has been accredited by COA.

Requests for reimbursement should be submitted in writing to:

Manager
 DCFS Office of Contract Administration
 406 East Monroe, Mail Station 455
 Springfield, Illinois 62701

- Reimbursement for site preparatory and corrective action costs will be paid under **Type Service Code 0135 – Accreditation Corrective Action Costs Reimbursement**.
- Corrective action and site preparatory costs are defined as one-time nonrecurring costs. On-going salary costs will not be considered.

DCFS will NOT reimburse a private agency for any penalties imposed by COA or for any of the costs associated with remedial visits. Remedial visits are follow up site visits required because of significant agency deficiencies.

DCFS will not reimburse the cost of any penalties imposed on the private agency as a result of the accreditation process. DCFS will not reimburse the annual maintenance fee for accreditation.

VI. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this Policy Guide should be directed to:

Manager
 DCFS Office of Contract Administration
 406 East Monroe, Mail Station 455
 Springfield, Illinois 62701
 (217) 785-3930

VII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File this Policy Guide immediately after Rule 356.