

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE

Verification of Disability/Special Need for Parent/Guardian

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the Lead Agency in the Commonwealth responsible for administering the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), which is a federal block grant that provides financial assistance to low-income, working families seeking high quality early education and out of school time care programs in Massachusetts.¹ **Child care financial assistance funded by CCDF is not an entitlement.**² Federal and state regulations establish maximum household income thresholds and require parents to participate in an approved service need activity, including work, education or training program.³ On a limited basis, an exception to the income and service need activity requirements may be granted for children/families receiving or in need of receiving protective services.⁴ **CCDF funded child care cannot be authorized for purposes of providing respite care** (e.g. to give a parent time off from parenting).⁵

On a case by case basis, financial assistance for early education and care programs may be available to a child, whose parent/guardian has a documented disability/special need, because the child is receiving or at risk of receiving protective services based on the parent/guardian being: (1) unable to work or participate in educational and/or training program; and (2) unable to provide a safe environment for the care of his/her child due to his/her disability/special need. Consideration may also be made for a parent/guardian who is providing full time care for a child with a disability/special need, thereby necessitating care for his/her other child(ren) – in such circumstances, the parent/guardian shall request a variance, in accordance with EEC policy.

The purpose of this verification form is threefold (1) to verify the existence of the disability/special need of the parent/guardian; (2) to explain how the disability/special need prevents the parent from working or participating in another EEC approved activity; and (3) to explain how the disability/special need impacts the parent's ability to provide a safe environment for the care of his/her child(ren), taking into consideration the ages and needs of the child(ren). **Please note: Parents/guardians with a documented physical or mental disability/special need may not be authorized for more than two years of child care.** Eligibility based upon disability/special need of parent beyond two years must be approved in writing by EEC.

SECTION I: DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS VERIFICATION

(to be completed by the professional)

The individual identified below has stated that s/he is unable to participate in an EEC approved service need activity such as work, school or training because of his/her disability/special need. S/he has requested EEC provide financial assistance to enroll his/her child(ren) in an early education and care program because s/he is unable to work and is unable to provide a safe environment for the care of his/her child(ren). Please fill out the information below to help us determine how we might best meet the needs of this family.

Who may fill out this form:

- If the disability/special need results from a physical health issue, this form must be filled out by a licensed physician.

¹ See G.L. c. 15D, § 2.

² See 42 U.S.C. 9858(d)(a).

³ See 45 CFR 98.20 and 606 CMR 10.04.

⁴ Id.

⁵ See 45 CFR 98.20 and Federal Register/Vol. 63, No. 142 @ p. 39948-39949.

- If the disability/special need results from an emotional or mental health issue, this form may be filled out by a currently licensed (1) psychiatrist, (2) doctorate level psychologist, (3) nurse practitioner, or (4) psychiatric nurse.

1. Your professional role (*check one – only professionals in roles listed here may complete this verification form*):

- Physician Psychiatrist Psychologist
 Nurse Practitioner Psychiatric Nurse

2. Name of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date of Birth _____

3. Name(s) of child(ren), including date(s) of birth:

4. Nature of **PARENT’S/GUARDIAN’S** special need(s)/disability (*check all that apply*):

- Physical disability/special need;
 Mental health disability/special need; or
 Other disability/special need.

5. How long have you been treating this individual? _____

6. I currently see this individual:

- daily weekly monthly other (specify frequency) _____

7. How does the disability/special need impact his/her ability to care for the child(ren) needing access to an early education and care program? {Check all that apply }

- Parent is in treatment during the day: _____ days/week and _____ hours/day;
 Parent’s special need/disability prevents the provision of a safe environment during the day; or
 Other _____

8. Please state the approximate date that the disability/special need commenced: _____ AND indicate the likely duration of the condition:

- Permanent At least 1 year, but not permanent 6 months to 1 year 6 months or less

9. Required Documentation to be attached to this verification form:

- A letter on official letterhead of the health professional completing this form providing specific information about the disability/special need. This letter must include the following:
- identification of your patient's disability/special need;
 - explanation of how the condition prevents your patient from working or participating in education or training programs;
 - explanation of how your patient's disability/special need impacts his/her ability to provide a safe environment for the care of his/her child(ren), taking into consideration the age(s) and needs of the child(ren); and
 - the amount of time child care is needed to accommodate the disability/special need and/or to provide a safe environment for his/her children, including the number of days per week and hours per day that early education and care services are needed.

Signature of professional: _____ Date: _____

Please print

Name: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

License number: _____

Please note you may be contacted by an EEC representative to verify this information. EEC reserves the right to deny or reject a claim of disability/special need if the verification form and/or its required attachments are incomplete or deemed inadequate. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact EEC at 617-988-6600.

SECTION II: MEDICAL RECORDS RELEASE (to be completed by the parent/guardian)

I am requesting financial assistance for child care based on my disability/special need. I authorize the professional identified in Section I to release the information requested on this form and I also authorize the professional to share medical records or other information about my disability and/or special need listed in Section I with the Child Care Resource and Referral agency (CCR&R), child care provider, and/or EEC in order to determine eligibility for child care financial assistance. I further authorize the CCR&R, child care provider and/or EEC to contact the professional identified in Section I to verify the information provided on this form and to discuss his/her diagnosis of my disability and/or special need **as it applies to the need for early education and care services.**

This form authorizes the professional to release most medical or health information with the following exception(s). The professional identified in Section I cannot disclose the following medical or health information, unless such disclosure is authorized. Please check the box next to each item below if you specifically authorize the professional to share the information described therein.

- I authorize the professional identified in Section I to share information about AIDS/HIV status.

- I authorize the professional identified in Section I to share information about drug or alcohol use.
- I authorize the professional identified in Section I to share information about psychological/psychiatric disorders.

I understand that this medical records release is valid for one year from the date signed below, unless I have cancelled the release in writing prior to its expiration.

I understand that I may cancel this medical records release at any time by sending a letter to the professional identified in Section I.

I also understand that, even if I cancel this release, the professional cannot take back any information that s/he has shared with the CCR&R, child care provider, and/or EEC when s/he had the authorization to do so.

Furthermore, I understand that my decision to authorize the professional identified in Section I to share medical information with the CCR&R, child care provider, and/or EEC is voluntary. However, I understand that if I do not authorize the professional to share medical information with the CCR&R, child care provider, and/or EEC, a determination regarding my disability and/or special need cannot be made and my child's eligibility for child care financial assistance will be decided without consideration of my disability/special need. I understand that EEC may deny or reject my claim of disability/special need if the verification form and/or its required attachments are incomplete or deemed inadequate.

Parent's/Guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

Please print

Parent's/Guardian's name: _____ Child's name & age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Second Parent/Guardian _____

Address (if different from above) _____ Phone: _____

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO YOUR CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCY OR YOUR CONTRACTED PROVIDER/SYSTEM. IT IS ALSO ADVISED THAT THE MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL AND THE PARENT/GUARDIAN KEEP A COPY OF THIS FORM FOR HIS/HER OWN FILES.