

# Nebraska Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Children and Family Services

Child Care Subsidy

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## Table of Contents

Approval and Implementation .....	5
Background and Overview.....	6
Purpose.....	6
Scope.....	6
Assumptions.....	6
Overview of Child Care.....	9
CCDF Responsibilities and Programs.....	9
Child Care Resource and Referral Program (CCR&R) .....	10
Head Start programs.....	10
Special Populations.....	10
ECICC .....	10
Disaster Proclamation and Response Process.....	11
Preparedness .....	11
Response .....	11
Recovery .....	11
Table 1: Preparedness.....	12
Table 2: Response.....	14
Table 3: Recovery.....	16
Child Care Roles, Responsibilities and Critical Activities.....	18
Child Care Roles and Responsibilities .....	18
Plan Development and Maintenance .....	18
Communication.....	18
Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce.....	18
Designees for Joint Response.....	19
Initial Assessment Tool .....	19
Policies and Regulations Review.....	19
Emergency Contact List.....	19
Provider Preparedness .....	19
Child Care Licensing Critical Activities .....	20
Child Care Subsidy Critical Activities .....	21
Child Care Emergency Response and Recovery.....	21
Emergency Preparedness Training and Planning.....	22
Temporary, Respite and Emergency Child Care.....	23
Appendices.....	24
Appendix 1: Acronyms .....	24

Appendix 2: Additional Resources ..... 25  
Appendix 3: Local Health Departments ..... 26  
Appendix 4: Nebraska Child Care Resource and Referral Offices..... 28



## Approval and Implementation

### Introduction

To: Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
Nebraska Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS)  
Nebraska Division of Public Health  
Nebraska Department of Education Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC)  
Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)  
Health Departments across the State of Nebraska

From: Nebraska Division of Children and Family Services – Child Care Subsidy

### **Subject: Nebraska Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan**

The reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act requires Agencies to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan to address how the agency will respond before, during and after a disaster. The Nebraska Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan provides a structure for preparation, response and recovery in the event of an emergency or disaster in Nebraska. This plan was prepared in coordination with other agencies within DHHS as well as statewide community resources to provide guidance for disaster recovery efforts for Child Care programs across the state.

Several disasters have occurred in Nebraska that have identified a critical need for child care to allow communities to respond to and recover from these disasters. The flooding of the Missouri River in July of 2011, and the tornados and storm damage in May of 2015 have all shown the need for child care services following a disaster in the State of Nebraska. Recovery efforts following severe disasters like these can be a very long term process for the people of Nebraska. Nebraska families and those who are assisting in the efforts to recover from these disasters require quality child care programs for their children. Child Care is an essential service in a community's ability to return to normal activities and assist children in addressing the trauma that may occur following a disaster. This plan was created by the Nebraska Child Care Subsidy Program, DHHS Division of Public Health – Child Care Licensing, Nebraska Child Care Resource and Referral, and many individuals at the state and local levels of emergency management.

Thank you for the assistance you provide in responding to and recovering from disasters that may occur and affect the infrastructure of Child Care in the State of Nebraska.

## Background and Overview

### Purpose

The purpose of this Disaster Plan is to identify the procedures for Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) to respond in the event of a disaster that affects Nebraska's child care programs. The plan utilizes already established emergency plans developed by other State Agencies to focus on existing procedures specific to Child Care and Child Care Subsidy eligible families. The plan identifies the responsibilities of the Child Care Subsidy Program, Licensing, local Health Departments and other identified organizations to help support child care providers and the families within Nebraska that have been affected by a disaster.

### Scope

The scope of this Emergency Preparedness Plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of DHHS and CCDF to prepare, respond and recover from a disaster that has affected the child care programs in the State of Nebraska. This plan focuses on Licensed Child Care programs, License-Exempt Child Care programs who are participating in the Child Care Subsidy program, the children in care of these programs, and the families who are receiving Child Care Subsidy.

This Emergency Preparedness Plan is developed in response to a declared disaster in the area that may be deemed a worst case scenario, and also provides procedures for disaster areas that have not been declared a state of emergency.

### Assumptions

This plan was created using the following assumptions:

- Child Care is an integral and essential part of a community's economic viability and should be restored as soon as possible following a disaster or pandemic event.
- Licensed providers have their own emergency and disaster plan, as required by their license. Licensed providers are required to train and rehearse these plans and communicate the information to the parents of children in their care.
- Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) plays a role in providing timely information to providers, parents and communities.
- This document is aligned with other state disaster planning documents.
- CCDF will abide by the principles of the National Incident Management System and the structures of the Incident Command System in its response operations.
- The disaster is determined to be "manageable" in that basic communication services are operational or will be operational within 3 to 7 days, and minimal utilities are operational, including power, water and gas.

Time frames within this plan are not exact and may vary depending on the extent of the damage.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), is responsible for the administration of the child care program. The Division of Children and Family services emergency preparedness plan is in effect from Federal Fiscal Year 2019-2021. The plan will align with the current Child Care state plan and will remain in effect from 10/01/2018 to 09/30/2021. The plan provides guidance to the Division of Children and Family Services and serves as the Division's plan for maintaining essential functions and services during a disaster.

The DCFS Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) acknowledges that other state agencies, to include the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) may be notified in a COOP response. NEMA has the responsibility for coordinating the response to major and catastrophic disasters. NEMA officials have firsthand knowledge of state-coordinated disaster and recovery efforts, up-to-date information that can be shared with DCFS personnel and assist in responding to the needs of children and families impacted by the disaster. NEMA may activate the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) located in the agency headquarters, located at the Joint Forces Headquarters of the Nebraska Military Department at the Army/Air National Guard base in Lincoln.

The SEOC becomes the center for a coordinated state response. DHHS personnel provide representation at NEMA on behalf of Emergency Support Function 8-Health and Medical during an SEOC activation. DHHS also may activate its department Emergency Coordination Center to coordinate DHHS response activities with NEMA. The SEOC can be activated for situations other than major disasters such as planned events, or in anticipation of an event that may require multi-agency coordination. The State Emergency Operations Plan establishes the policies, plans, guidelines, and procedures that will allow all emergency resources to function effectively when disaster strikes. The State Emergency Operations plan is an all hazards plan. The Nebraska Continuity of Government Plan (COG) establishes the policies, plans, guidelines and procedures that will allow for the preservation, maintenance, and reconstitution of the state government's ability to carry out its responsibilities under all circumstances that may disrupt normal governmental operations.

DCFS has an extensive and thorough communication process in place to communicate with partners and customers during, after, and in anticipation of emergencies. DHHS Communication and Legislative Services (CLS) has an established Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Plan in place to coordinate all communications on behalf of DHHS.

CLS will take the lead in reviewing press releases, disaster updates, and other written communications regarding the disaster in coordination with the state Joint Information Center (if activated). CLS will help disseminate information via media outlets in the affected areas. CLS also has pre-developed web pages and are able to work with video production to stream important video messages on the internet.

The DCFS has a process in place of notifying tribes of the nature of the emergency or disaster. As deemed appropriate, DCFS will coordinate identified services with the tribe to ensure continued health and safety of the children.

The role of DCFS is to support consumers and providers in the provision of safe and healthy service alternatives for children and families during and after disasters or emergencies. This includes provisions for the coordination and communication in the event of a disaster or emergency, coordination in the relocation of children in affected areas, the assessment of the ability of DCFS and partner agencies to function, the assessment of providers' needs, and

provision for the establishment of temporary placement care. The DCFS plan details the procedures to be followed in caring for children, youth and families in the event of a disaster or emergency; and focuses on planning and procedures for the continued care and supervision of all children and families served, both during and after the disaster.



## Overview of Child Care

### CCDF Responsibilities and Programs

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for the management and administration of the child care programs funded by state and federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) including, but not limited to:

1. Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Program
2. Child Care Licensed Providers
3. Child Care Subsidy Providers
4. Child Care quality improvement initiatives
5. Child Care professional development initiatives
6. Statewide Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan

The CCDF administers the Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Program. The Child Care Subsidy program assists families with paying for child care to allow them to work, attend educational programs or other approved activities. Families are able to apply through the ACCESSNebraska website or by phone at (800)383-4278. Initial eligibility is up to 130% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Transitional Child Care is also available for families' whose income is over 130% FPL after initial eligibility is met. Families' then remain eligible so long as during the certification period their income remains under 85% state median income (SMI). At redetermination for Transitional Child Care, a household must meet the second tier of eligible which is 185% FPL. Family fees start at 100% FPL or greater.

The DHHS Division of Public Health is responsible for the management and administration of the Child Care Licensure program. Child Care Licensing is responsible for the implementation and regulation of licensing standards for child care programs in Nebraska. Each child care license is defined below.

In Nebraska, anyone who provides child care to four or more children from different families must be licensed as a child care provider. The following are the five different license types:

- Family Child Care Home I is a license within the home of the provider. There is a maximum capacity of eight children of mixed ages and two additional school age children during non-school hours.
- Family Child Care Home II is a license in the home of the provider or another site. There is a maximum capacity of twelve children with two providers in the facility.
- Child Care Center is a child care license that is licensed for at least 13 children.
- School-Age-Only Center is a child care license that is licensed for at least 13 children who are attending or have attended school.
- Preschool Child Care is a child care license that provides educational services to children who do not nap and are not fed a meal.

There are two different types of License-Exempt Child Care Providers that have an agreement for Child Care Subsidy. It is unknown how many License-Exempt providers there are in Nebraska that do not have a Child Care Subsidy agreement because these providers are not regulated by DHHS.

- License-Exempt Child Care is an individual who is providing care in his/her own home, serving a maximum of three children from different families or six children from one family.
- In-Home Child Care is care provided to children in their own home.

## Child Care Resource and Referral Program (CCR&R)

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC) is designated as the statewide coordinator of CCR&R.

The CCR&R has contracted with the Early Learning Connection Partnerships (ELCs) across Nebraska to provide local assistance to Child Care Providers. More information regarding the location and contact information for each of the ELC Partnerships can be found in Appendix 4.

## Head Start programs

Early education programs such as The Nebraska Head Start Association are administered under the Department of Education and are exempt from Licensing requirements unless the program chooses to be licensed under DHHS. The Nebraska Head Start Association was implemented to provide education, leadership and advocacy to improve the quality of life for Nebraska's children, families and communities. The program provides quality, comprehensive services to prepare low-income children and their families for school. The Nebraska Head Start Association has their own Emergency Preparedness Plan that is developed through the federal Head Start program.

## Special Populations

A special population is defined as a child who requires extra care because of an acute or chronic physical or mental condition that has been verified by a physician. In order to be considered a child with a special need, the child must have one or more of the following conditions, not related to chronological age: emotional impairment; developmental age level lower than chronological age requiring assistance via special supervision; movement impairment; sensory impairment; speech impairment; hygiene, feeding, or toileting that requires assistance or special equipment; medical conditions; therapy or medications.

## Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC)

The Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council was created to advise and assist collaborating agencies in ensuring provisions of state and federal statutes having to do with early child hood care and education initiatives under state supervision are met.

## Disaster Proclamation and Response Process

Emergency management is best conceptualized as a cycle of planning and preparedness activities, response and recovery. The more complete the preparedness, the shorter the response and recovery time for any emergency.

### Preparedness

Preparedness includes activities and planning that allow agencies to prepare for emergency and disaster situations during times of non-emergencies or disasters. The preparedness phase involves training staff on emergency preparedness plans and developing relationships between agencies and people who are likely to be involved in any response activities. Testing plans and exercises are also a critical part of being prepared. Preparedness activities to be completed by all the agencies involved in this plan are included in the Preparedness Table.

### Response

Response is initiated when a disaster or emergency incident is recognized. During this phase, agencies should implement plans created during the preparedness phase. The response requires agencies to participate in activities that assess the status of child care infrastructure and support the resumption of child care activities in affected areas. The Response Table identifies activities agencies in this plan may complete in the response phase. Disasters may be sequential and compounding and the response is then prolonged. The purpose of the response is to meet the immediate life-safety needs to those directly impacted.

### Recovery

Recovery efforts may take days or years to complete depending on the scale and scope of the disaster and the impact at the local level. As soon as agencies and the child care infrastructure are no longer immediately responding or overwhelmed, the response phase ends. The recovery continues until the child care infrastructure has resumed normal operations or all activities are complete and there is a new child care infrastructure. The Recovery Table identifies activities agencies in this plan may complete in the recovery phase. Recovery is intended to help providers establish a “new normal” mode of operation, if possible. In many cases, disaster assistance will not restore providers immediately to the previous level of operation.

**Table 1: Preparedness**

Critical Activities/ Capabilities	NE Department of Health and Human Services	NE Division of Child and Family Services	CCR&Rs
Plan Development and Maintenance	Develop an Emergency Preparedness plan for child care in Nebraska. Review the plan annually and revise as needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train appropriate staff on the plan</li> </ul>	Participate in child care emergency preparedness planning cycle under DHHS's lead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train appropriate staff on the plan</li> </ul>	Participate in child care emergency preparedness planning cycle under DHHS's lead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train appropriate staff on the plan</li> </ul>
Communication	Lead the process for developing collaborative communication protocols for sharing information about child care following a disaster. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include information in the plan</li> </ul>	Participate in the development of the communication protocols for sharing information following a disaster	Participate in the development of the communication protocols for sharing information following a disaster
Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce	Convene the NE Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce	Participate in the NE Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce	Participate in the NE Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce
Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)	Develop and maintain a COOP that addresses vital child care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop continuity plans for Child Care Subsidy, and Child Care Licensing</li> <li>Develop an appropriate backup for data systems and other vital records</li> </ul>	Develop and maintain a COOP that addresses vital child care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop continuity plans for Child Care Subsidy, and Child Care Licensing</li> <li>Develop an appropriate backup for data systems and other vital records</li> </ul>	Develop and maintain a COOP that addresses vital child care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop continuity plans for CCR&amp;R</li> <li>Develop an appropriate backup for data systems and other vital records</li> </ul>
Designees for Joint Response	Designate one or more staff to work directly with DCFS and other state agencies to plan and respond to disaster that impact child care Designate a representative to consult and coordinate with DHHS Emergency Preparedness and Response and DHHS State Incident Response Liaison (ESF8 Representative)	Designate a person in DCFS to consult and coordinate with DHHS and other state agencies to plan and respond to disasters that impact child care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated staff will communicate with the EOC the immediate response needs related to child care providers</li> </ul>	Designate one or more staff as contacts for response related to child care providers
Initial Assessment	Develop an Initial Assessment Tool to determine the status of providers post disaster	Develop an Initial Assessment Tool to determine the status of providers post disaster	Participate in the development of an Initial Assessment Tool to determine the status of providers post disaster
Policies and Regulations Review	Identify NE administrative rules and policies regarding child care that may need to be waived, changed, or amended during the response	Identify NE administrative rules and policies regarding child care that may need to be waived, changed, or amended during the response	Identify potential contract revisions needed to enable CCR&R to assist with recovery efforts

Emergency Contact List	Maintain, update and distribute the NE child care response contact list as needed	Keep the updated child care emergency response contact list accessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep DHHS contact information current</li> </ul>	Keep the updated child care emergency response contact list accessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep CCR&amp;R contact information current</li> </ul>
Provider Preparedness	Develop and implement event exercises to test the plan and train all involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make training and planning materials available for CCR&amp;R and providers</li> <li>• Support CCR&amp;R in their efforts to train child care providers</li> </ul>	Monitor licensed providers and licensed exempt providers for compliance with standards related to emergency preparedness plans and supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance and sample plan templates to providers</li> </ul>	Promote and/or provide training and technical assistance to providers and parents around disaster preparedness.

ACF Role:

- ACF will assist in Nebraska’s emergency planning efforts in child care.

**Table 2: Response**

Critical Activities/ Capabilities	NE Department of Health and Human Services	NE Division of Child and Family Services	CCR&Rs
Plan Development and Maintenance	Activate the child care emergency response plan when necessary	Implement the designated roles in the plan	Implement the designated roles in the plan
Communication	Implement communication protocols for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collecting from CCR&amp;R, child care providers, and communities</li> <li>Disseminating information to partners, providers and families</li> <li>Sharing information among agencies and organizations</li> </ul>	Implement communication protocols as outlined in this plan	Implement communication protocols as outlined in this plan
Child Care Emergency Preparedness Committee	Activate the NE Child Care Taskforce as needed with support from ACF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings may range from daily conference calls to in-person meetings</li> </ul>	Participate in the NE Child Care Taskforce if convened	Participate in the NE Child Care Taskforce if convened
Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)	Implement the Child Care COOP to continue operations that address DHHS vital child care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement continuity plans as indicated for child care subsidy payments and authorizations, and approval of child care providers during a disaster</li> <li>Keep data systems working and vital records secure. Use back-up systems as needed.</li> </ul>	Implement the Child Care COOP to continue operations that address DHHS vital child care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement continuity plans for licensing functions during a disaster</li> <li>Keep data systems working and vital records secure. Use back-up systems as needed.</li> </ul>	Implement plan to continue child care referrals, provider support, and other functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep data systems and vital records secure. Use back-up systems as needed.</li> </ul>
Designees for Joint Response	Designated staff will continue to communicate with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DHHS and other state agencies</li> <li>CCR&amp;R</li> <li>ACF</li> </ul>	Support DHHS in communicating child care resource needs to the SEOC, as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist in the identification of provider, family, and community needs related to child care</li> <li>Relay information to DHHS point of contact</li> <li>Advocate for resources needed to resume child care operations</li> </ul>
Initial Assessment	DHHS staff will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather information about providers from</li> </ul>	Child Care Licensing Specialist will contact providers as soon as	Support DHHS/CCDF in gathering information from the initial assessment tool, if requested.

	<p>Child Care Licensing Specialist and CCR&amp;R</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile provider information from assessments; share compiled information with the leadership of DHHS, NEMA and ACF</li> <li>• Support CCDF in gathering information from the initial assessment tool, if requested.</li> </ul>	<p>possible after the disaster event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather information from providers using agreed upon initial assessment tool.</li> <li>• Compile provider information from assessments; share compiled information with the leadership of DHHS, NEMA and ACF</li> <li>• Forward updated provider information to Child Care Licensing for entry on to the provider database</li> </ul>	
Policies and Regulations Review	Implement the disaster policies and procedures. Determine if further policy revision or waiving is required.	Implement the disaster policies and procedures. Determine if further policy revision or waiving is required.	Provide technical assistance to child care providers and families related to disaster policies and procedures
Emergency Contact List	Use the NE Child Care Disaster response contact list to support ongoing response efforts. Update information as needed.	Have current NE child care disaster response contact list accessible	Have current NE child care disaster response contact list accessible
Provider Preparedness	The Emergency Preparedness Workbook has been distributed to providers via their Resource Development Worker. DHHS will support training on implementing the guide for providers.	Child Care Licensing Specialists and Resource Development Workers will verify that child care providers have emergency plans as required by Licensing and Child Care Subsidy Standards.	Copies of the Emergency Preparedness Workbook are available online in English and Spanish. CCR&R will support child care providers in developing and implementing their plans.

ACF Role:

- ACF will provide support to Nebraska DHHS in the implementation of the Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- ACF will receive child care status information from the state and forward to federal offices as appropriate.
- ACF will assist Nebraska in coordination of resources.

**Table 3: Recovery**

Critical Activities/ Capabilities	NE Department of Health and Human Services	NE Division of Child and Family Services	CCR&Rs
Plan Development and Maintenance	Follow the plan guidance to bring the child care infrastructure to recovery. After the event, there will be a debriefing and the Plan will be updated to include lessons learned.	Participate in the debriefing to include relevant lessons learned.	Participate in the debriefing to include relevant lessons learned
Communication	Continue to follow communication protocols established in the plan	Continue to follow communication protocols established in the plan	Continue to follow communication protocols established in the plan
Child Care Emergency Preparedness Committee	Convene the Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce to conduct a debriefing of the event and review the plan for possible revisions	Participate in the Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce work group	Participate in the Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce work group
Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)	Restore DHHS child care functions (data systems and vital records) to pre-disruption levels of operation until COOP is not needed.	Restore DHHS child care functions (data systems and vital records) to pre-disruption levels of operation until COOP is not needed.	Restore operations (data systems and vital records) back to pre-disruption levels of operation until COOP is not needed.
Designees for Joint Response	Designated staff will continue to communicate with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCDF and other state agencies</li> <li>• CCR&amp;R</li> <li>• ACF</li> </ul>	Support DHHS in communicating resource needs to resume the child care infrastructure	Assist in identifying provider, family and community needs related to child care. Relay information to DHHS/DCFS points of contact
Initial Assessment	Continue to share updated results from the initial assessment tool with DCFS and ACF. Review the initial assessment tool and revise as needed.	Participate in the review of the Initial Assessment Tool	Participate in the review of the Initial Assessment Tool
Policies and Regulations Review	Review policies and procedures that were waived, changed or amended during the disaster. Determine if these were appropriate and what else may be required to support the resumption of the child care infrastructure. Review changes that were made and consult with ACF to determine whether an amendment to NE's CCDF Plan is necessary.	Review Child Care Licensing standards and procedures that were waived, changed or amended during the disaster. Determine if these were appropriate and what else may be required to support the resumption of the child care infrastructure	Participate in the review of policies as requested by DHHS and DCFS



Emergency Contact List	Maintain, update and distribute the NE child care emergency response contact list	Keep the updated child care emergency response contact list accessible	Keep the updated child care emergency response contact list accessible
Provider Preparedness	<p>Continue to provide technical assistance and information on emergency preparedness resources available to providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current resources available to child care providers and update as necessary. Identify additional resource needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Promote and/or provide training and technical assistance to child care providers and parents about emergency preparedness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and provide feedback to DHHS about emergency preparedness resources, tools and templates for child care providers.</li> </ul>	<p>Promote and/or provide training and technical assistance to child care providers and parents about emergency preparedness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and provide feedback to DHHS and DCFS about emergency preparedness resources, tools and templates for child care providers.</li> </ul>

# Child Care Roles, Responsibilities and Critical Activities

## Child Care Roles and Responsibilities

### Plan Development and Maintenance

CCDF Administration and program staff are responsible for the development, maintenance and distribution of the plan. CCDF Administration and program staff will review the plan annually, or more often if needed. Annual review of this plan will be in coordination with the identified agencies who participated in the development of this plan.

### Communication

Communication protocols are included throughout this Plan and will be reviewed and updated as indicated above.

The key contacts for all child care providers will be their assigned Resource Development Worker and/or Licensing Specialist. Providers can also reference the resources listed at the back of this Emergency Preparedness Plan for more information regarding community resources in their area.

There are two separate databases in which Child Care Providers information is stored. Child Care Licensing keeps an updated Roster of Licensed Child Care Providers on their website, which contains the name, address, licensing information and capacities of each facility. Printouts would be made available in the event of an emergency, if necessary. DHHS also has a database that contains demographic information for all Child Care Licensed and Child Care Subsidy providers. These databases will be utilized to collect all needed information for each Child Care Provider in the state of Nebraska.

### Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce

The Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce was formed to finalize an emergency preparedness plan for the child care infrastructure in Nebraska. The taskforce has been led by CCDF Administration with representatives from Child Care Licensing, Head Start, CCR&R, Nebraska Department of Education, including Step Up to Quality and Early Childhood Education.

Following a disaster, a work group will be convened by CCDF Administration to coordinate assessment, response, and recovery efforts related to the child care infrastructure. The entities involved in the work group will depend on the severity of the disaster, including but not limited to:

- Child Care Emergency Preparedness Taskforce
- Nebraska Department of Public Health
- ACF Office of Child Care
- American Red Cross

## Designees for Joint Response

The Child Care Subsidy Administrator or designee will:

- Work with CCDF and CCR&R regarding child care issues identified during a disaster
- Be the point of contact for data sharing
- Be the point of contact for issues related to payment continuity
- Be the point of contact for continuity of subsidy eligibility determinations and adjustments in subsidy payments

The Child Care Licensing Program Manager will be the point of contact for issues related to initial assessments, emergency licenses, or other documents

## Initial Assessment Tool

Child Care Licensing has developed an Initial Assessment Tool for use with child care providers. Child Care Licensing Specialists will be assigned to complete these initial assessments, either by phone or in person, if possible. The information collected from this tool will be shared with DHHS and ACF. Individual provider information from the assessment will be entered into the Statewide Provider Database.

## Policies and Regulations Review

DHHS will identify laws, regulations and policies that may be waived for alternative compliances in the event of a disaster. If laws and or/regulations are revised, through an Executive Order, as part of the Governor's Declaration Proclamation or through an Exception to the Rule, the CCDF Administrator will review the changes and consult with ACF Office of Child Care to determine whether an amendment to Nebraska's CCDF Plan is necessary.

## Emergency Contact List

The CCDF Administrator or designee is responsible for maintaining an updated contact list of people involved in the operations to support families in accessing child care; and child care providers in offering safe services.

## Provider Preparedness

License Exempt Providers are required to complete the Emergency Preparedness Workbook which is provided by the provider's Resource Development Worker, as well as online for child care providers, CCR&R etc.

Licensed Providers are required to complete Emergency Preparedness activities outlined in regulation, that are verified by the Child Care Licensing Specialist at all inspections.

All CCDF providers are expected to have procedures that address the following, at minimum:

- Evacuation
- Relocation
- Shelter-in-place
- Lockdown
- Staff emergency preparedness training and practice drills

- Communication and reunification with families
- Continuity of operations
- Accommodation of infants and toddlers
- Accommodation of children with disabilities
- Accommodation of children with chronic medical conditions

Further trainings are available online for child care providers and are listed in the Additional Resources at the end of this Plan.

### Child Care Licensing Critical Activities

Child Care Licensing does not provide an emergency preparedness plan that covers all licensed providers. When a disaster is declared, Child Care Licensing Specialists will evaluate each child care provider on a case by case basis. The assigned Child Care Licensing Specialist will complete an immediate inspection of the child care program to determine if the facility is safe to continue operation. In addition to Child Care Licensing Specialists, the Fire Marshal and Health Inspectors are also utilized to determine if the location meets the standards to operate as a child care facility. In the event that an alternate location is identified by the licensed provider, Child Care Licensing Specialists, the Fire Marshal and Health Inspectors would then inspect the alternate location to ensure that disruption to child care services are kept to a minimum. Alternative compliances may be used when a program cannot meet the state's regulation, but is able to meet the intent of the regulation. All Child Care Licensing Specialists and staff are trained on the use of alternative compliances. One of the alternative compliances that may be utilized is waiving immunization requirements in the event that the information is not available. Any alternative compliances will be approved on a case by case basis, and must meet minimum health and safety standards. Typically, the approval of an alternative site is limited. If the length of stay needs to be longer than initially identified, some of the alternative compliances may be rescinded, if Child Care Licensing determined the program needed to make more permanent changes to ensure that the children remain safe in the alternative location.

The Licensure Unit maintains a listing of all managers, including the program manager for Child Care Licensing. If the Program Manager was not available in the event of an emergency, the Licensure Unit Administer would take over and direct all activities. Child Care Licensing Specialists are trained on the appropriate use of alternative compliances. In the event of an emergency, Licensing Management would be responsible for directing all activities. The Licensure Unit does not practice emergency drills. In the event of an actual emergency situation, all Child Care Licensing Staff would be directed by Management.

Child Care Licensing has a list of all public and non-public schools in Nebraska that could be utilized as possible relocation sites, if relocation is determined necessary. There are not currently contracts in place to provide assistance in setting up temporary child care facilities. In the event of an emergency, it will be determined whether the need for a contract is necessary based on the current emergency situation.

## Child Care Subsidy Critical Activities

45 CFR 98.53 enables families to access high-quality child care in areas where families have been displaced or where existing child care facilities are not operating or have been rendered unsafe. The DHHS Operations Disaster Team will identify the needs of families' currently receiving subsidy services, establish processes to prevent disruption in services and implement procedures to process new applications for families needing assistance as a result of the emergency.

The Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Program has procedures in place to make quick changes to the parent's child care authorization. In the event that families need to make changes to their child care authorization due to an emergency, the parents would need to call ACCESSNebraska. The agency has the option to waive a family fee for families that have been displaced or impacted by a federal or state declared emergency.

The Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Program has procedures in place to address emergency situations in which families who receive subsidized child care are required to adjust their hours and/or wages. Child Care Subsidy has regulations in place to address these instances if they are not determined to be ongoing and only in the event of an emergency. Any amount of money received under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 because of a presidentially declared major disaster is not considered when determining a family's eligibility.

In the event of an emergency, there would be no changes to our current payment processes. The providers are not expected to have any delay in their payments during an emergency and procedures are in place to be followed to ensure timeliness of payment. Families and/or providers will be responsible to notify DHHS of any address changes.

## Child Care Emergency Response and Recovery

The primary purpose of the DCFS plan is to ensure that DCFS can continue normal business operations, and assure that critical operations can resume/continue normal processing. Throughout the recovery effort, this plan establishes clear line of authority and prioritizes work efforts. The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is responsible for general emergency planning and agency coordination in support of the State Emergency Operations Plan. The NEMA Director has been designated to act as the State Disaster Coordinator by the Nebraska's Governor. Before, during and after a disaster or emergency, the DHHS Management Team, DCFS Director or Deputy Director will notify the CCFS Management Team the nature of the disaster and that the plan has been activated. Decisions will be made at the Division level by a DCFS Management Team. The DCFS Director, Deputy Director's or a member of the DCFS Management Team will determine which disaster teams to activate and which functions in the Division's Disaster Plan are to be carried out. The DCFS Management Team will make important decisions about emergency strategies, policies, and resources and will serve primarily as the Division's lead in the event of a disaster. DCFS will use a team structure to plan and oversee its disaster response. DCFS will collaborate with other agencies on disaster response activities through the state emergency response team.

The roles of DCFS is to support consumers and providers in the provision of safe and healthy service alternatives for children and families during and after disasters or emergencies. This includes provisions for the coordination and communication in the event of a disaster or emergency, coordination in the relocation of children in affected areas, the assessment of the ability of DCFS and partner agencies to function, the assessment of providers' needs, and provision for the establishment of temporary placement care. The DCFS plan details the

procedures to be followed in caring for children, youth and families in the event of a disaster or emergency; and focus on planning and procedures for the continued care and supervision of all children and families served, both during and after the disaster.

## Emergency Preparedness Training and Planning

DCFS requires contractors to develop and maintain a written disaster plan and submit it for review annually. Such plans must focus on planning and procedures for the continued care and supervision of all children served by DCFS, in the event of a disaster. All contractor disaster plans must be developed in accordance with the criteria set forth by the federal government and the additional guidelines provided in this plan. The Child Care Licensing Division requires licensees to have a written plan that addresses their operation procedures and communication in the event of an emergency. Child Care Licensing regulations require licensee's to have a written plan that addresses disaster preparedness procedures as well.

To meet regulatory compliance, child care center staff, and family child care home providers must complete a health and safety training that includes emergency preparedness. The same providers must also have emergency plans that include procedures for evacuation and relocation; sheltering-in-place; man-made disasters; addressing the individual needs of children; communication and reunification with parents or other approved individuals designated by the parents; and continuity of operations.

Child Care Licensing provides information, forms, and resources to child care providers to help assist them in developing their emergency preparedness plans for their own facility.

The CCDF requires non-relative License-Exempt providers to develop and maintain a written disaster plan, which is reviewed annually. Non-relative License-Exempt providers must complete a pre-service training and complete an emergency preparedness training workbook that includes procedures for evacuation and relocation; sheltering-in-place; man-made disasters; addressing the individual needs of children; communication and reunification with parents or other approved individuals designated by the parents; and continuity of operations.

To meet federal requirements, DHHS Child Care Resource Development staff are responsible for ensuring all non-relative License-Exempt Providers have completed the Emergency Preparedness Workbook. The agency will provide trainings and other written communications regarding emergency preparedness to all providers.

## Temporary, Respite and Emergency Child Care

Child Care Providers may need to operate in different settings post-disaster. Some of these options include:

- Temporary Disaster Shelters, which may be located at American Red Cross Shelters
- Temporary locations outside of the disaster site, these could include both center based providers and family home providers.
- DHHS Licensing Specialists can also help providers with assistance in finding alternate ways of providing child care.
- Some regulations may be waived to allow the setup of temporary locations for child care providers to operate. Any regulations that may be waived will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Acronyms

ACRONYM	ABBREVIATION FOR:
ACF	Administration for Children and Families
CCDF	Child Care Development Fund
CCDBG	Child Care Development Block Grant
CCR&R	Child Care Resource and Referral Program
CLS	Communication and Legislative Services
COG	Continuity of Government
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
DCFS	Division of Children and Family Services
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
ECICC	Early Childhood Training Center
ECTC	Early Childhood Training Center
FPL	Federal Poverty Level
NDE	Nebraska Department of Education
NEMA	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
SEOC	State Emergency Operations Center



## Appendix 2: Additional Resources

The **Public Health Department** has information available to assist with preparing for emergency situations. Visit the website at:

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Emergency-Response.aspx>

Contact your **Local Fire Department** for advice and to assess your facility for emergency preparedness.

Contact your **Local Health Department** to obtain more information regarding how to prepare in the event of an emergency. See Appendix 3

Contact **Nebraska Emergency Management Agency** for additional planning and preparedness information. Visit the website at <https://nema.nebraska.gov/>

The **Office of Child Care** has Emergency Preparedness Resources available for Child Care Providers to assist with preparing for emergency and disaster responses. Visit the website at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/emergency-preparedness-resources-for-child-care-programs>

**Child Care Aware of America** provides information about Emergency Preparedness resources, tools and trainings to ensure that you are prepared in the event of an emergency. <http://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/crisis-and-disaster-resources/>

**Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** provides funds to serve meals to eligible children and adults. Children who are residents of emergency shelters are automatically eligible for free meals.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program>

**American Red Cross** provides support in disaster situations  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** provides assistance and resources for mental health needs.

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

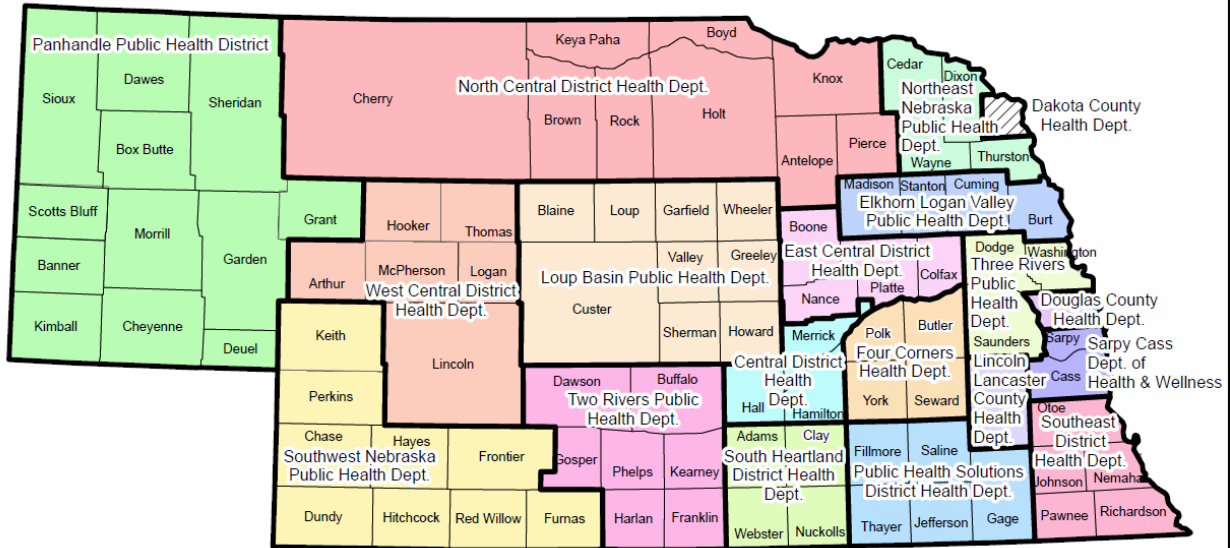
**Office of Human Services, Emergency Preparedness and Response** provides additional information and resources for response and recovery efforts.

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohsepr>


## Appendix 3: Local Health Departments

Nebraska Health Departments		
<p><b>Central District Health Dept.</b> 1137 South Locust St Grand Island, NE 68801 (308) 385-5175 <a href="http://www.cdhd.ne.gov">www.cdhd.ne.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Clay County Health Dept.</b> 209 North Calvary Avenue Clay Center, NE 68933 (402) 762-3571 <a href="http://www.claycounty.ne.gov">www.claycounty.ne.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Dakota County Health Dept.</b> 1601 Broadway St PO Box 155 Dakota City, NE 68731 (402) 987-2164 <a href="http://www.dakotacountyne.org">www.dakotacountyne.org</a></p>
<p><b>Douglas County Health Dept.</b> 1111 South 41<sup>st</sup> St Omaha, NE 68105 (402) 444-7471 <a href="http://www.douglascountyhealth.com">www.douglascountyhealth.com</a></p>	<p><b>East Central District Health Dept.</b> 4321 41<sup>st</sup> Ave PO Box 1028 Columbus, NE 68602 (402) 562-8950 x210 <a href="http://ecdhd.ne.gov">http://ecdhd.ne.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Dept.</b> PO Box 779 Wisner, NE 68791 (402) 529-2233 <a href="http://www.elvphd.org">www.elvphd.org</a></p>
<p><b>Four Corners Health Dept.</b> 2101 North Lincoln Ave York, NE 68467 (402) 362-2621 <a href="http://www.fourcorners.ne.gov">www.fourcorners.ne.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept.</b> 3140 N St Lincoln, NE 68510 (402) 441-8000 <a href="http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/health">www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/health</a></p>	<p><b>Loup Basin Public Health Dept.</b> 934 I St PO Box 995 Burwell, NE 68823 (308) 346-5795 <a href="http://www.loupbasinhealth.com">www.loupbasinhealth.com</a></p>
<p><b>North Central District Health Dept.</b> 422 East Douglas St O'Neill, NE 68763 (402) 336-2406 <a href="http://www.ncdhd.ne.gov">www.ncdhd.ne.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Northeast Nebraska Public Health Dept.</b> 215 North Pearl St Wayne, NE 68787 (402) 375-2200 <a href="http://www.nnphd.org">www.nnphd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Panhandle Public Health Dept.</b> 808 Box Butte Ave PO Box 337 Hemingford, NE 69348 (308) 487-3600 <a href="http://www.pphd.org">www.pphd.org</a></p>
<p><b>Polk County Health Dept.</b> 330 N State St PO Box 316 Osceola, NE 68651 (402) 747-2211 <a href="https://polkcounty.nebraska.gov/courty-offices/health-department">https://polkcounty.nebraska.gov/courty-offices/health-department</a></p>	<p><b>Public Health Solutions District Health Dept.</b> 995 East Hwy 33 Suite 1 Crete, NE 68333 (402) 826-3880 <a href="http://phsneb.org">http://phsneb.org</a></p>	<p><b>Red Willow County Health Dept.</b> 1400 West 5<sup>th</sup> McCook, NE 69001 (308) 345-1790 <a href="http://redwillowhealth.com">http://redwillowhealth.com</a></p>
<p><b>Sarpy/Cass Health Dept.</b> 701 Olson Drive Suite 101 Papillion, NE 68046 (402) 339-4334 <a href="http://www.sarpycasshealthdepartment.org">www.sarpycasshealthdepartment.org</a></p>	<p><b>Scottsbluff County Health Dept.</b> 1825 10<sup>th</sup> St Gering, NE 69341 (308) 436-6636 <a href="http://www.scottsbluffcounty.org/health-department/health-department.html">www.scottsbluffcounty.org/health-department/health-department.html</a></p>	<p><b>South Heartland District Health Dept.</b> 606 North Minnesota Suite 2 Hastings, NE 68901 (402) 462-6211 <a href="http://southheartlandhealth.org">http://southheartlandhealth.org</a></p>
<p><b>Southeast District Health Dept.</b> 2511 Schneider Ave Auburn, NE 68305 (402) 274-3993 <a href="http://www.sedhd.org">www.sedhd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Southwest Nebraska Public Health Dept.</b> 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> St PO Box 1235 McCook, NE 69001 (308) 345-4223 <a href="http://www.swhealth.ne.gov">www.swhealth.ne.gov</a></p>	

# Nebraska Local Health Departments



**Legend**

 Local Health Department that does not Qualify for LB 692\* Funding

0 45 90 Miles

\*LB 692 passed during the 2001 Legislative Session and provides funds to qualifying local public health departments.

**NEBRASKA**  
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 DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Map updated by:  
 Public Health GIS Analyst  
 DHHS GIS 12/16

Source: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

## Appendix 4: Nebraska Child Care Resource and Referral Offices

Early Learning Connection Locations		
<b>Central Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 10 PO Box 850 Kearney, NE 68848 Phone: 308-237-5927	<b>Panhandle Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 13 1114 Toledo Street Sidney, NE 69162 Phone: 308-254-4677	<b>Early Learning Connection Omaha Region</b> Educational Service Unit 3 6949 South 110 <sup>th</sup> Street LaVista, NE 68128 Phone: 402-597-4991
<b>Platte Valley Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 7 2657 44 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Columbus, NE 68601 Phone: 402-564-5753	<b>High Plains Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 16 314 West 1 <sup>st</sup> Street PO Box 915 Ogallala, NE 69153 Phone: 308-284-8481	<b>Southeast Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 6 210 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Milford, NE 68405 Phone: 402-761-3341
<b>Northern Early Learning Connection Partnership</b> Educational Service Unit 1 211 Tenth Street Wakefield, NE 68784 Phone: 402-287-2061		

Map of the Area Early Learning Connection Partnerships

