

Provider Business Procedures

Level **A** and Level **B**

The South Carolina
ABC Child Care Program

abcqualitycare.org ■ 1.800.763.ABCD

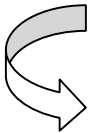
P.O. Box 1520 ■ Columbia, SC 29202-1520

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REVIEW AT A GLANCE WHO TO CALL AND WHEN

If any of the following occurs or is about to occur, the provider must report this information to the ABC Child Care Program by telephone or by writing to the appropriate person/office listed below. The provider must not send any information with their SVL.



REPORT THESE ITEMS TO ABC PROGRAM MONITORING

- The facility is being investigated by DSS (Child Protective Services)
- The facility is notified by DSS that their License/Registration is being revoked or the application for renewal is being denied.
- Change in facility address or payment address [must submit new W-9]
- Change in phone number
- Change in FEIN or Social Security Number [must submit new W-9 and IRS letter if FEIN #]
- Change in Director [must submit proof of educational requirements]
- Change in Rates [must submit rate change form and current rate schedule]
- Plans to sell facility/change of ownership/entering management agreement
- Closing of facility permanently
- If provider needs to add or delete an age group
- Change in Regulatory Status [must submit copy of new License or Registration]
- Change in name of child care facility [must submit new W-9 and IRS letter]

ABC CHILD CARE PROGRAM MONITORING

Monitor:

Phone:

E-Mail: _____ @DSS.SC.GOV

OR

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ @DSS.SC.GOV

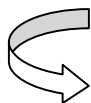
There are two offices of ABC Program Monitoring.

Each office is responsible for providers in certain counties. Locate the county your facility is in. The address for the ABC Program Monitoring Office is listed below the counties for which they are responsible. Throughout the Business Procedures where it refers the provider to contact ABC Program Monitoring, this is the office you would contact:

Aiken
Allendale
Bamberg
Beaufort
Berkeley
Calhoun
Charleston
Clarendon
Colleton
Darlington
Dillon
Dorchester
Florence
Dorchester
Florence
Georgetown

Abbeville
Anderson
Cherokee
Chester
Chesterfield
Edgefield
Fairfield
Greenwood
Greenville
Kershaw
Lancaster
Laurens
McCormick
Oconee
Pickens
Saluda

Hampton	Pickens
Horry	Spartanburg
Jasper	Union
Lexington	York
Marion	Greenville Technical College
Marlboro	ABC Child Care
Newberry	P. O. Box 5616, Station B
Orangeburg	Greenville, SC 29606-5616
Richland	Phone: (864) 250-8468
Sumter	Fax: (864) 250-8044
Williamsburg	
ABC Program Monitoring S. C. Department of Social Services P. O. Box 1520 Columbia, SC 29202-1520 Phone: (803) 898-2772 Fax: (803) 898-4510	



REPORT THESE ITEMS TO THE ABC CONTROL CENTER:

- When a child has missed ten consecutive days
- Inquiries regarding payment if payment not received after 10-14 working days from the date of SVL receipt by the ABC Child Care Program
- If provider is going to discontinue services to a client
- If provider will be temporarily closed for a week or longer
- If clients fail to attend the program after authorization is given

ABC CHILD CARE CONTROL CENTER

ABC Child Care Program
 ATTN: Provider Team
 S. C. Department of Social Services
 P. O. Box 100160

Phone: (800) 262-4416
 Fax: (800) 310-5417

Columbia, South Carolina 29202-3160

INTRODUCTION

These procedures were developed as a guide for the operating practices of the payment, documentation and reporting system for the ABC Child Care Program, hereafter referred to as the ABC Program. Upon notification to providers, the S. C.

Department of Social Services, at its sole discretion, may amend these procedures. Once notified in writing, the provider shall be responsible for compliance to the amended procedure for the purpose defined. Provider compliance will ensure timely and proper payment.

THE PROVIDER MUST REVIEW THESE PROCEDURES TO INSURE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS REQUIRED. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THESE PROCEDURES CAN BE REFERRED TO ABC PROGRAM MONITORING.

I. PROVIDER SELECTION

The ABC Program advocates parental choice and clients are responsible for selecting the provider of their choice. The following are steps to be taken when a client selects the provider's facility:

THERE ARE TWO WAYS IN WHICH THE PROVIDER MAY BE CONTACTED TO SERVE A CHILD:

- 1) **By the DSS Supportive Services Specialist (SSS):**
 - a. The SSS will contact the provider to determine if a slot is available. **IMPORTANT:** If at anytime accepting a client will cause the facility to exceed the licensing capacity, then the provider cannot accept the client.
 - b. The parent may also contact the provider, but the SSS must be the person to verify the slot and authorize the service for the client.
 - c. The SSS will determine what type of care (full-time, half-time, or less than half-time) is needed for the client.
 - d. If the provider has a slot available, the SSS will discuss with the provider the type of care needed and establish a start date for the child to begin. [Note: DSS Human Service Workers and DSS Case Managers are not authorized to give start dates for child care, only the SSS].

- e. The provider must make sure they are enrolled for the care type needed. If the provider is not authorized for a particular care-type, they may contact ABC Program Monitoring to request this care-type be added (See X. Amendment of a Provider’s Enrollment).
- f. The SSS will send the provider a written letter of approval with the start date and stop date for service. Be sure to pay close attention to these dates, as payment will not be made before the start date, nor after the stop date. **THE PROVIDER MUST NOT SERVE THE CLIENT WITHOUT APPROVAL FROM THE SSS!**
- g. After the SSS has keyed the client’s application into the ABC Program, the ABC Control Center will also send a letter of approval called the “Authorization/Connection Letter” to the provider, which gives detailed information about the authorized service. The ABC Program will not be responsible for payment for services not properly authorized.

2) **By a client already authorized for services:**

The client may already be receiving services at another provider, and wants to transfer to the provider’s facility. [Refer to VIII. Client Transfer, for more detailed information]

- a. The provider should see at least one acceptable i.d. of the client to ensure proper identification
- b. The provider must mail the blue Client Connection Postcard or fax the Client Connection Fax Form to 1-800-310-5417, in order to connect the client to their program and initiate the payment process for that client. The provider may receive the blue Connection Card or Fax Form from the ABC Control Center or from the parent to obtain authorization to begin services to the client. This must be done in time to receive approval before serving the client. **DO NOT SERVE THE CLIENT BEFORE RECEIVING WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE ABC PROGRAM! IF YOU DO, THE ABC PROGRAM WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT.**

care type [age group] for which they have not been enrolled. A provider may be enrolled for full-time care type, but not half-time, etc. If providers are unsure as to the care types for which they are enrolled, they should refer to their enrollment information mailed to them or call ABC Program Monitoring. Care types may be added at the provider's request and upon determination by ABC Program Monitoring that the facility meets requirements.

- c. Upon receipt of the Connection Postcard or Fax, the ABC Control Center will verify that the client is eligible to receive services, and that the provider is enrolled to serve the care type requested. The ABC Control Center will then authorize the provider to serve the client (if the client has complied with transfer procedures) and make the necessary "connection" in the system with an established start date.

- d. The ABC Control Center will send the provider an "Authorization/Connection Letter" confirming the connection. The letter will include information such as the authorization date, provider billing rate, client fee, care type authorized and number of weeks of care. **THIS IS THE PROVIDER'S AUTHORIZATION LETTER. THE PROVIDER MUST NOT SERVE THE CLIENT BEFORE RECEIVING THE AUTHORIZATION LETTER WITH THE APPROVED DATE.**



SPECIAL NOTE: If clients fail to attend the child care program for ten consecutive days after authorization is given, the provider must notify the ABC Control Center on the 11th day.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Providers who are not licensed by DSS cannot serve Foster children and CPS (Child Protective Service) children. If you are a licensed provider whose license has expired, and are trying to serve a Foster or CPS child, you must contact ABC Program Monitoring.

II. MAXIMUM CARE ALLOWED

Clients can receive up to a maximum of 52 weeks of care during any one-year period of eligibility. This may be full-time care, part-time or a combination of the two.

III. ABSENCES

Each child is allowed a certain number of absences based on the number of weeks of care that is authorized. The maximum allowable days a child can be absent is 31 days, which is allocated only when 52 weeks of care is authorized. If a child is authorized for less than 52 weeks of care, they will receive a pro-rated share of allowable absences based on the number of weeks of service they receive.

- 1) The ABC Program will pay the weekly rate for the child when absences occur. However, once the child has exceeded the allowable absences, the client's eligibility can be terminated by the ABC Control Center with the provider receiving written notification. If absences are for an illness, the ABC Control Center must receive a Doctor's statement in order for the absences to be waived.
- 2) If a child misses ten consecutive days without a waiver the provider must discontinue billing and notify the ABC Control Center. If the child returns to the provider on the **11th day**, the provider may bill for the ten consecutive days of absences and submit those days as absences. If the child does not return, services will terminate on the Sunday following the 10th consecutive absence.
NOTE: If the child does not return on the 11th day and payment is rendered past the 10 days of absences, the amount of over-payment will be deducted from the provider's check.
- 3) Children may have individual weekly scheduled days that the child attends the facility. Failure to attend on these days shall be reported as an absence.

EXAMPLE: A parent may work three 12-hour shifts on Monday, Tuesday

and Thursday, and decide to keep the child home on Wednesday and Friday. The child would not be considered absent on Wednesday or Friday because they don't normally attend on these days; however, if the child failed to attend on the other days, he/she would be considered absent. The provider must discuss the child's schedule and agree on an arrangement with the parent upon accepting the child. Providers should keep a tally of absences for each ABC client so they will know when a child has exceeded his/her maximum allowed absences.

Because in many instances absences are reported after the fact on the Service Voucher Log [SVL], a child will be terminated without notice when absences are exceeded. Therefore, all absences must be reported accurately on the SVL.

- 4) Facility closures for Holidays or vacation by the provider should not be reported as absences for the children.

IV. PAYMENT – [What to do to get paid]

Providers will submit the Service Voucher Log [SVL] for payment.

- 1) Requests for payment will be honored only after a start date is authorized for each child.
- 2) Providers will receive written authorization for each client they have requested to serve, if approved.
- 3) Providers must not serve a child prior to receiving written authorization. **Those who do so will be serving the children at their own risk, as authorizations/payment cannot be backdated.** Therefore the connection card/fax has to be received by the ABC Program in time.
- 4) If a connection card/fax is received, any day other than MONDAY, care will begin the following Monday. If cards or faxes are received on Monday, services can begin the same Monday, if needed.
- 5) Once a client has been authorized for services to begin at the provider's facility, the first SVL will be mailed from the ABC Program. It will contain the name(s) and Social Security Number(s) of the clients the provider is

authorized to serve, along with other information to help in billing.

V. PAYMENT PROBLEMS

Payment is expected to take from 10 to 14 working days from the date the ABC Program receives the signed SVL. **Providers are required to wait until after the 14th working day before calling about reimbursement.**

The provider may call the ABC Control Center [1-800-262-4416] with questions regarding payment problems, or transactions that did not process.

The following describes three types of “Remittance Advice” Statements a provider will or can receive with each reimbursement check:

- 1) **Paid Provider Remittance Advice:** This will be received with each check. The Paid Remittance Advice will identify the client, child, and payment amount for each transaction on the submitted SVL which make up the check total. Providers are to match the Paid Remittance Advice against the provider's copy of the SVL to ensure proper payment for each transaction.
 - 2) **Rejected Remittance Advice:** This may be included. It identifies the children and week(s) of service that were not paid and the reason.
 - 3) **Adjusted Remittance Advice:** This may also be included, if funds were deducted from the provider's check. Funds can be deducted if an overpayment occurred.
-

VI. PROVIDER RATE CHANGES

1) **Rate Increases**

Providers who increase their child care rates may request a rate increase from the ABC Program.

- The provider must call ABC Program Monitoring and request a Rate

Change Form be sent to them.

- The form is signed and dated by the provider, and returned with the required documentation to ABC Program Monitoring. The form will be completed by ABC Program Monitoring.
- With the Rate Change Form, the provider must include a copy of their published/written child care rates [i.e. written fee policy, parent handbook with rates included] along with any correspondence given to parents notifying them of the rate increase. The rate increase will not be processed without this information. Providers who do not currently have a written fee policy [outlining what rates they charge] are strongly encouraged to develop one
- Providers will receive written notification of the outcome of their request for a rate increase. They should contact ABC Program Monitoring if they have not received anything within a month of submitting the request
- Once approved, the rate increase will not immediately take effect for those clients currently being served by the provider. The payment rate will remain the same until the client's eligibility period is renewed. If the client continues to select the provider, then the new payment rate will be effective for the client with the date of their new eligibility period
EXCEPTION: Foster care children are the only clients immediately connected at the new rate
- Any new clients selecting the provider on or after the date of the rate increase will be paid at the new rate
- If the provider charges more than the maximum allowed by the ABC Program, then only the maximum will be paid. The provider may require the client to pay the difference between their rate and the maximum paid by the ABC Program

2) Rate Decreases

Providers who decrease their rates **must** notify ABC Program Monitoring and request a Rate Change Form be sent to them.

- The same procedures as outlined in Rate Increases will be followed

with the exception that all rate decreases will be **effective immediately** without regard to the client's eligibility status

VII. CLIENT FEE

The client fee is based on family size and income, which is determined by the ABC Program. **The provider is responsible for the collection of client fees in advance of service delivery and documenting that those fees are paid in a timely manner.** The ABC Program assumes no responsibility for collection or payment of client fees.

Foster parents and clients participating in the Family Independence Program do not pay client fees. However, they are responsible for the difference between the provider's rate and the maximum rate paid by the ABC Program, if the provider's rate exceeds the maximum amount.

- 1) The client fee is to be collected weekly in advance of service delivery. ****Providers should not let clients get behind on their weekly fees. <Refer to the Special Note under Client Transfer – VIII.>**
- 2) The provider may discontinue services to the client when client fees are not paid.
- 3) The provider must seek authorization from the ABC Control Center before discontinuing services to a client for failure to pay the client fee [Refer to XI.].
- 4) The amount of the client fee and any second child discount are deducted from the ABC payment to the provider.

VIII. CLIENT TRANSFER

Clients may transfer from one provider to another.

- 1) **Clients** must notify the ABC Control Center either by telephone or in writing

- and receive approval prior to the transfer.
- 2) Clients may be required to adhere to the provider's established policy for notification of transfer.
 - 3) The effective date of the transfer will be the 1st Monday following the 7th working day after the ABC Control Center receives the phone call or written notice from the client requesting the transfer.

To determine the effective date of transfer:

The day the ABC Control Center receives the phone call or written notice is considered day one of the notice. Then begin counting seven working days from that date. In counting the 7 days, do not include state observed Holidays [i.e. 4th of July, Labor Day, etc.] or weekends, as they are not considered working days. Whatever date the 7th working day falls on, the transfer date will be the next Monday after that.

EXAMPLE: Request is made on Wednesday. Counting seven [7] working days beginning with Wednesday, the 7th working day would fall on Thursday of the next week. The transfer date would be the next Monday following this Thursday.

- 4) Notice can be waived under unusual circumstances if sought by the client. The ABC Control Center will notify providers if waivers are approved.
- 5) The previous provider will not be paid after the start date is established for the new provider. **THE ABC PROGRAM WILL NOT PAY TWO PROVIDERS FOR THE SAME WEEK.**
- 6) The previous provider will be notified by telephone of the client's last authorized day of service. A "Transfer Letter" will also be sent.
****SPECIAL NOTE: Clients with unpaid fees at the time of the transfer will still be allowed to transfer. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure client fees are paid timely.**

IX. RECORDS

These records listed below are required to be kept on-site and will be

reviewed during regular monitoring visits. Providers should establish good record keeping methods and maintain all documentation in an orderly fashion. Records shall be maintained until reviewed or a minimum of 3 years, whichever is longest.

1) **Attendance**

- **Daily attendance records must be maintained for each child served through the ABC Program**
- Attendance may be documented in several different ways by recording days of attendance and days of absences on a roll book or log sheet to include the USDA Log Sheet, or sign-in/sign-out sheets or computer logs, etc. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If provider uses sign-in/sign-out sheets, and the parents fail to sign-in and also sign-out, the DSS Auditors may recoup funds
- Records must match the absences reported on the SVL submitted for the period. **PROVIDERS MUST ACCURATELY REPORT ALL ABSENCES ON THE SVL and include dates of the absence(s).**
- Absences occurring after submission of an SVL must be reported on the next SVL
- **Providers who do not maintain daily attendance or accurate records may be required to repay funds if the provider cannot provide documentation that child attended the program**

2) **Receipts for Grant Purchases**

- The providers must maintain receipts on-site for items purchased under the grant for a period of three (3) years for audit purposes.

3) **Service Voucher Log [SVL]:**

- Providers must maintain copies of the SVL on-site for a period of three (3) years for audit purposes. Providers must Xerox the SVL and keep a copy on-site
- Providers must review the SVL against the Provider's Remittance Advice

4) **Staff Records:**

An individual file should be kept on-site for each staff employed. Information should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Name and Job Title of Staff, i.e. Director, Lead Teacher, or Assistant Teacher
- Copy of High School Diploma/GED Certificate
- Copies of any degrees/certificates/diplomas or college transcript
- Documentation of child care experience, i.e. resume, completed job applicable, letters of reference, etc.
- Copy of educational plan, if applicable
- Documentation of training received, i.e. certificates, and progress toward meeting educational requirement
- Documentation of CPR/First Aid Certification, if applicable
- Physician Health Statement
- TB Test results or applicable statement
- Discipline Policy signed and dated yearly

5) **Client/Child Records:**

An individual file should be kept on-site for each child enrolled through the ABC Program. Information should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Parent name, child's complete name [especially if last name is different than parent, Social Security # of parent. It is helpful to cross-reference each child's file with other children from the same family, especially when the last names are different
- ABC Authorization/Connection Letter – describes the client's name and name of the child, amount of billing, start and stop dates, client fee amount (if applicable), and type of care OR
- DSS Authorization Letter – describes the client's name and name of the child, start and stop dates, and client fee amount (if applicable)
- Copies of immunization records for children under age five (5)
- Discipline Policy signed and dated by the parent yearly

- Any correspondence from the ABC Program related to the client

X. AMENDMENT OF A PROVIDER'S ENROLLMENT

A provider's enrollment can be amended at any time after enrollment in the ABC Program. An amendment can be initiated by the provider and/or ABC Program Monitoring.

◆ **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY CHANGES WITH YOUR SVL.**

The provider must notify ABC Program Monitoring if any changes or amendments need to be made to their enrollment.

Amendments may occur for, but are not limited to, the following reasons:

1) **Adding or Deleting Additional Age Group:**

- a. Providers can request to add another age group(s) not previously enrolled by contacting ABC Program Monitoring. Providers must be currently providing child care services for the age group.
 - Providers must meet regulatory requirements for age group(s) served
 - An on-site visit is required for child care centers to add age groups, but is not required for family/group child care homes
- b. Providers can request to add half-time or full-time for an age group already enrolled.
- c. Providers should request to delete an age group if they are no longer serving an age group or do not want to be enrolled for that age group.

2) **Change in Facility's Regulatory Status:**

- a. The provider must notify ABC Program Monitoring if one of the following occurs:
 - If provider changes from Family to Group
 - If provider changes from Family or Group to a Center
 - If provider changes from a Group to a Family
 - If provider changes from Center to a Family or Group

- b. The provider must forward a copy of the appropriate regulatory document (license/registration) to ABC Program Monitoring to support the change.
- c. The provider must notify ABC Program Monitoring within one (1) working day if their registration or license is revoked or the application for renewal is denied by the DSS/Child Care Licensing.
- d. The Provider must notify ABC Program Monitoring in writing within one (1) working day if they are under investigation by the DSS/Child Care Care Licensing/OHAN, or another local, state or federal agency.

3) **Change in Name of Child Care Facility:**

If the provider changes the name of the child care facility they must:

- Notify ABC Program Monitoring in writing
- Submit a signed W-9 Tax form which can be requested from ABC Program Monitoring

4) **Change in Director of Child Care Facility:**

If there is a change in the Director of the child care facility they must:

- Notify ABC Program Monitoring in writing or by phone
- Submit documentation [i.e. degree, CDA, diploma, etc.] that director meets the qualifications outlined in the Child Care Standards
- If needed, submit signed educational plan indicating director will obtain approved credential, certificate, diploma, or degree within three years. An educational plan can be obtained from ABC Program Monitoring
- Submit a copy of the new DSS License/Registration with the new Director's name

5) **Change in Mailing/Payment Address or Phone Numbers:**

If there is a change in the facility address where services are provided [other than the provider has moved], such as a change because of 911 or payment address, or phone number:

- Notify ABC Program Monitoring in writing

6) **Working Telephone:**

If there is a change in the facility phone number where services are being delivered:

- Notify ABC Program Monitoring in writing or by phone. (The provider must maintain a working LAN telephone at all times, at the facility where services are being delivered. Non-published numbers are not allowed)

XI. TERMINATION OF SERVICES TO CLIENTS

1) Termination of Services by the Provider

Providers have a right to stop serving a client or child if either is disruptive to the program or does not comply with the provider's established policies. Providers must notify clients and the ABC Control Center by calling the provider line at [800-262-4416] before discontinuing services to the client.

- The reason for termination of services must be included, i.e. failure to pay fees, parent does not pick child up on time, or child displays disruptive behavior, etc.
- The termination date will be the last day of the service week, (always a Sunday) in which the provider asked the client to leave
- Clients should be notified by the provider [preferably in writing] a minimum of three working days in advance of the effective termination date
- Clients should be allowed to finish any week in which the provider has billed for the client

2) Termination of Eligibility by the ABC Program

The ABC Control Center may terminate a client's or child's eligibility. Once a decision has been reached to terminate eligibility, the provider will receive oral and written verification.

- If termination of eligibility is initiated by the SSS or the ABC Control Center, the provider and client will be notified by phone that the client's services are being terminated and all payments for services rendered after the termination date will become the client's

responsibility

- The provider will be mailed a **Denial/Termination Letter** that reflects the effective date of termination and the reason for the termination. A minimum of 10 calendar days advance notice will be given from the date the determination to end services is made, unless extenuating circumstances exist, and a waiver is given to the client

XII. TERMINATION OF A PROVIDER'S ENROLLMENT

TERMINATION BY DSS

The ABC Program will terminate any ABC child care provider if the provider fails to comply with the requirements of the ABC Program and criteria for enrollment at the Level enrolled. To maintain enrollment in the ABC Program at any ABC Level, providers are required to meet regulatory requirements, and attendance and payment documentation requirements at all times. Additionally, to enroll in the ABC Program and maintain enrollment at Levels A and B, providers are required to meet ABC Levels A or B prerequisites, as applicable, at all times. A child care facility will be terminated as an ABC provider for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

1. **Failure to Maintain Regulatory Requirements or Regulatory Status in Good Standing** – If a provider fails to maintain their regulatory status in good standing, or if the provider's regulatory status is revoked, denied, or suspended, or an injunction is issued to close the facility, the ABC status of the provider will be terminated. Termination should be immediate.

If a provider is under appeal with Child Care Licensing and the health and/or safety of the children are jeopardized, depending on the severity of the circumstances, termination should be immediate.

2. **Failure to Meet ABC Mandatory Requirements** – If a provider does not satisfactorily meet the ABC mandatory requirements, within the prescribed

timeframe for correction required for maintaining enrollment, the provider will be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.

- 3. Failure to Maintain Required Program Assessment Scores** – If a Level A provider scores less than an average of 3.75 for the facility or less than 3.50 on the interaction subscale during an on–site Environment Rating Scale assessment, the provider may be offered an opportunity to move to ABC Level B and receive an on–site Level B assessment within 90 days. If the provider does not choose to move to ABC Level B or during the Level B assessment, the provider does not receive the 80% score required, the provider shall be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.

If a Level B center–based facility scores less than 65% in each age group or a home facility scores less than 65% overall during an on–site ABC Level B Child Care Standards assessment, and is not able to correct the deficiencies/violations and make the 80% score required within 90 days, the provider’s ABC status shall be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.

At ABC Level B, an age group shall be de–enrolled if the age group scores at least 65%, but fails to make the 80% required score after 3 assessments within a 1–year period of the initial low score assessment.

- 4. Failure to Meet Staff–Child Ratios Requirements** – If a provider does not meet the required staff–child ratios 3 times during a 1–year period, the provider’s ABC status may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients. To determine whether a provider has failed to meet staff to child ratios 3 times, ABC will rely on reports from ABC staff and child care licensing staff.
- 5. Failure to Meet Supervision Requirements** – If a provider does not meet supervision of children requirements 3 times during a 1–year period of the initial finding, the provider’s ABC status may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to provider and clients. If the supervision offense results in harm

to a child, termination of the ABC enrollment should occur with the first offense and termination should be immediate.

6. **Failure to Meet Regulatory Capacity** – If a provider exceeds the regulatory capacity of a facility 3 times during a 1–year period, the provider may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
7. **Use of Corporal Punishment** – *The ABC Program defines corporal punishment as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes but is not limited to spanking, slapping, biting, and shaking.* (1) If a family child care home or group child care home uses corporal punishment, termination of the facility will occur on the first offense. (2) If a child care center uses corporal punishment and the owner/operator administered the corporal punishment or condoned the corporal punishment, termination of the facility will occur on the first offense. (3) If a child care center uses corporal punishment and a staff person administered the corporal punishment who is not the owner/operator, and the corporal punishment was not condoned by the owner/operator, the provider should be given an opportunity to take corrective action. If staff at the facility uses corporal punishment 2 times within 12 months, the facility will be terminated. Providers and clients should be given 10–calendar days notice when termination results from the use of corporal punishment by a staff person other than the owner/operator, unless it is determined that abuse or neglect occurred. If it is determined by OHAN to be abuse or neglect or if the inflictor is the owner/operator, termination may occur on the 1st offense and should be immediate.
8. **OHAN Finding(s)** – If there is an OHAN finding against a staff at an ABC facility that is life threatening or poses an immediate and substantial threat to the health and/or safety of the children enrolled, and the perpetrator is not barred from the facility, the facility’s ABC status will be terminated and termination should be immediate.
9. **Failure to Report Investigations Against Facility** – If a provider fails to notify the ABC Program of any investigation or inquiry received by Child Welfare Services about suspected, or actual, child protective services

violations; or investigation or inquiries initiated by any governmental entities, to include law enforcement, concerning possible violations of health and/or safety laws or regulations, termination should be immediate.

10. **Substantiated Complaints** – If a provider has 3 substantiated complaints regarding lack of compliance with program policies, within a 12 months period, the provider may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients. If any substantiated complaint is life threatening or poses an immediate and substantial threat to the health and/or safety of the children, the termination should be immediate.
11. **Smoking in Facility** – If a provider has 3 documented incidents of violating Public Law 103–227, Part C, Environmental Tobacco Smoke Act, also known as the Pro–Children Act, which prohibits smoking in any indoor facility used routinely or regularly for the provision of health, day care, education, or library services to children under the age of 18 years, the provider will be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
12. **History of Repeated Violations with ABC Requirements** – If a provider has 3 documented incidents of non–compliance with the same ABC mandatory standards during a 12–month period of the 1st offense, the provider may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
13. **Failure to Comply with ABC Corrective Action Plan** – If a provider has an approved ABC corrective action plan and does not correct the deficiencies/violations within the timeframe allowed (including any extension of time allowed for correction), the provider will be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
14. **Facility Ownership Changes** – A provider will notify the ABC Program at least 30 days prior to the sale of an ABC facility. The provider should also notify the clients when they plan to sell the facility. If a provider sells the

facility, the provider's ABC enrollment agreement becomes null and void effective the date of the sale.

The new owner may immediately enroll the facility in the ABC Program at Level C if the regulatory requirements at the facility are met in all areas/rooms where children are served and the regulatory status is in good standing. If the new owner enrolls the facility at Level C, within 90 days after the facility is enrolled, an ABC Level B on-site visit can be conducted. If all Level B prerequisites are met and the provider receives a score of at least 80%, the facility can be enrolled at Level B. New owners interested in being enrolled at Level A, must complete the process for Level A enrollment.

15. **Facility Moves** – If a facility moves to a new location and the regulatory requirements are met at the new location, the regulatory status is in good standing, there is no turnover of the director, and at least 75% of the caregiver staff remains with the facility, the enrollment may be transferred to the new location at the current ABC level. If the provider is issued a provisional license at the new location, the provider should be enrolled at Level C until the regular license is issued. When the provider is issued their regular license, if all prerequisites for ABC enrollment at the previously enrolled level are met, the provider's enrollment may be updated to the level previously enrolled.

16. **Failure to Provide Child Care Services at Enrolled Address** – Providers should notify ABC in advance of days the facility will be closed or if the facility is moving or closing. If unannounced on-site visits are conducted to ABC facilities when the facility should be in operation, and services cannot be verified at the enrolled address 2 times within a 30-day period, the provider will be terminated. The ABC Program will provide written notice by certified mail to the provider after the first attempt to visit is made to notify the provider that if services cannot be verified during the next unannounced on-site visit, the facility will be terminated. If an unannounced on-site visit is conducted and there is no evidence of child care services being offered at the enrolled address, termination should occur after the 1st instance.

Terminations should be immediate and funds should be recouped for the period when services could not be verified.

17. **Failure to Respond to Attempts by ABC Staff to Reach the Provider** – If there are 3 documented attempts within a period of 15 business days, by the ABC Program to reach the provider, by phone, letter, e-mail, and/or on-site visit and there is no response by the provider, the provider will be terminated and termination should be immediate. Notice of the termination should be sent by certified mail. Funds should be recouped for the period of time when there is no evidence that services were provided.
18. **Failure to Operate During Stated Hours of Operation** – If a provider has 3 documented incidents of non-compliance with the stated hours of operation during a 1-year period, the provider may be terminated with 10-calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
19. **Failure to Maintain LAN Phone Service** – Providers are required to have LAN phone services where ABC children are served. When it becomes known to the ABC Program that a provider does not have LAN phone services at a facility where ABC child care services are provided, the provider should be given 30 days to secure LAN phone services. If the provider does not secure LAN phone services within the 30 days; or if it is documented that the provider did not have LAN phone services 2 times within a 12-month period, the provider's ABC enrollment status may be terminated with 10-calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
20. **Misuse of ABC grant funds** – If a provider misuses ABC grant funds on purchases other than its approved use and the provider does not reimburse the ABC Program within the timeframe given for reimbursement, the provider may be terminated with 10-calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
21. **Fraud** – If a provider intentionally makes a false statement or representation regarding a material fact or fails to disclose a material fact that results in obtaining, attempting to obtain, or continuing to receive ABC funds which the provider would not otherwise qualify to receive, the provider's ABC status will

be terminated immediately and funds should be recouped for the period when the provider did not qualify for the funds.

22. **Owner, Director, and/or Operator Guilty of Fraud in Another State or Federally Funded Program** – If an owner commits fraud in another state or federally funded program, the facility’s ABC status will be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to provider and clients.
23. **Failure to Maintain ABC Documentation Requirements** – If a provider is cited 3 times for the same record keeping violations within a 12–month period, the provider may be terminated with 10–calendar days notice to the provider and clients.
24. **Verbal or Physical Abuse of ABC Staff** – If a provider curses or yells at an ABC staff, threatens, or physically challenges him/her during the course of conducting ABC business, the provider’s ABC status may be terminated.
25. **Refusal to Allow ABC Representatives Access to the Facility** – If a provider refuses to allow an ABC staff on the premises or in the building of the child care facility where ABC children receive services, and the ABC staff is on official ABC business during operating hours of the facility and the provider is open for business, the provider’s ABC status should be terminated.

VOLUNTARY TERMINATION BY PROVIDER

Request from Provider to Terminate ABC Enrollment – Providers may voluntarily request to end their enrollment with the ABC Program as a Level A, B provider, by notifying the ABC Program Monitoring in writing or through a documented telephone contact.

RE-ENROLLMENT

Waiting Period for Re-enrollment – Providers who are terminated or who voluntarily request termination must wait a period of six months from the date of

termination before they may reapply to come back into the ABC Program at any Level.

RE-ENROLLMENT EXCEPTIONS

1. **Death of a Child** – When a negative action by a provider results in the death of a child at a facility, the provider cannot be re-enrolled.
2. **Fraud** – Providers found guilty in court or in a federally funded program of committing fraud cannot be re-enrolled.
3. **Administrative or Judicial Determination of Abuse and/or Neglect** – Providers with staff who abuse or neglect children cannot be re-enrolled as long as the perpetrator continues to be employed and/or present at the facility.

CLIENTS DURING APPEALS PROCESS

No new ABC clients should be allowed to connect to an ABC facility during an appeal with DSS ABC or Child Care Licensing. However, providers may continue serving current children connected unless the health and/or safety of the children are jeopardized.

NOTE: Providers who receive a grant must remain enrolled in the ABC Program for one year from the date the grant funds are received by the provider. Failure to remain enrolled for the one year for any reason will result in recoupment of the grant funds.

XIII.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Definitions of key terms are presented to ensure clarity and understanding. These definitions express the administering agency's intent and meaning for the terms identified.

ABC Child Care Control Center: (ABC Control Center)

The authorized child care voucher system management center that is available to provide assistance to clients and providers, and to handle child care applications, funding and connecting.

Providers call: 1-800-262-4416 for notification requirements and/or questions concerning ABC Program procedures.

Parents call: 1-800-476-0199 for any questions.

ABC Child Care Program (ABC Program):

The South Carolina statewide child care assistance program funded by Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and state match.

ABC Child Care Program Monitoring (ABC Program Monitoring):

The entity that enrolls, monitors, and provides technical assistance to providers enrolled in the ABC Program, and makes all changes to a provider's file. There are two offices of ABC Program Monitoring.

Absenteeism:

When the child is **not** present (absent all day) at the provider's facility during the service unit (week) either due to illness, vacation, or court ordered non-custodial visitation or for other known or unknown reasons.

Activity Fees

Activity fees are considered other fees charged by the provider to parents such as transportation fees, or special activity fees, etc. These fees are the responsibility of the parent.

Authorized Service Period:

The specific time frame that child care services are authorized for a client and a specific provider.

Billing Rate:

The provider's weekly service rate minus any applicable client fee, and any discount for a second child.

Care Type:

The age groups 0–2 years, 3–5 years, and 6–12 years in which the provider has enrolled with the ABC Program. Providers cannot offer services to ABC clients or receive payment for service in a care type in which they have not been enrolled.

Center-based Care:

Facility licensed by DSS to serve 13 or more children.

Child:

The recipient of child care services.

Child Name:

The first name of the child.

Child Number:

This is the client's Social Security number plus the two digit code 01, 02, etc. assigned to the child. It identifies the child for the purpose of payment and system activities. **Providers should never change the assigned child number.**

Client:

An individual who has met the eligibility criteria and is funded for child care.

Client Fee:

That portion of the provider's weekly service rate (cost) which is based on the client's family size and income, and paid by the client directly to the provider. The fee amount is established by SCDSS on the basis of family size and gross family income. That portion of the child care cost, which is paid by the client directly to the child care provider.

Client Number:

The client's Social Security number. This number identifies all client activity in the system.

Client Termination of Eligibility:

Action taken when the client is no longer eligible for services. Once notified that the client's eligibility is terminated, the provider is not eligible for payment for services.

Connected:

A start and stop date (linked to a specific provider) within the ABC Voucher System.

Continuity of Care:

Continued funding provided to children after the first year, based on availability of funds and the family's continued eligibility.

Denial:

When an applicant is denied child care assistance due to inability to meet eligibility criteria or failure to comply with application requirements.

Eligibility Period:

The amount of time authorized for the individual child to receive child care services.

End Date:

The last date of service authorization.

Facility Cost:

The cost a provider charges all parents for a week of child care. Note: Parents are responsible for the difference between the facility cost and the amount paid by the ABC Program, plus any applicable client fee.

Family Child Care Home:

Home registered or licensed by DSS to serve no more than 6 children.

Family Independence Act of 1995:

An Act passed by the South Carolina General Assembly to require the DSS to emphasize employment and training with only a minor welfare component. The Act specifies action required by DSS to implement “Welfare Reform”. It also specifies requirements for applicants and recipients in order to receive financial assistance.

Family Independence: (FI)

Child care assistance provided to current FI stipend clients to encourage participation in approved employment, education, or training activities. These requirements are met through the Family Independent Program in SC in an effort to emphasize parental responsibility and self-determination.

Family Independence Stipend:

A monthly payment made to a family who meets the required eligibility standards; previously referred to as Welfare or AFDC.

Foster Care:

Children who are in the custody of DSS and placed out of their home by and/or under the supervision of DSS.

Full-:

Thirty or more hours of child care service provided during one week.

Funded:

Any child for whom dollars have been allocated in their name.

Group Child Care:

Home licensed by DSS to serve no more than 12 children.

Half-Time Care:

Less than thirty (30) hours, but more than fifteen (15) hours of child care service provided during one week.

Level A:

Exemplary programs measured against rigorous quality standards.

Level B:

Programs measured against quality standards beyond basic state regulations.

Level C:

Programs meeting basic licensing regulations (health & safety)

Less than Half-Time Care:

Less than fifteen (15) hours of child care service provided during a week. No registration fee is allowed for this care-type. This care-type only applies to Welfare Reform participants receiving subsidized child care.

Maximum Rate:

Maximum weekly rates established by SCDSS on the basis of a market rate survey of urban and rural counties, type of facility, and care types.

Payable Adjustment:

The process of paying the provider for monies due them.

Provider Identification Number:

The Federal Employer Identification Number [FEIN] or Social Security number of the provider. This number identifies the provider for purposes of payment, tracking and reporting.

Receivable Adjustment:

The process of collecting monies that were paid to the provider that were not due them.

Registration Fee:

A fee most providers charge to clients participating in a child care program. This fee covers program costs not included in the service rate i.e., insurance, materials, supplies. This fee may not exceed the fee charged to

private-paying clients in the child care program. Registration fees must be billed during the time the child attends at the facility. Registration fees cannot be billed after the child has left the program. A Provider is not eligible for a registration fee for clients receiving less than half-time care. The provider may require the client to pay the fee if the client has used up their allocation for registration fees.

Remittance Advice:

A document included with the provider's check. There are three different types: 1) Paid Remittance Advice: indicates what clients and weeks were paid; 2) Rejected Remittance Advice: indicates which clients and weeks were not paid and the reason; 3) Adjusted Remittance Advice: indicates if funds were deducted from the provider's check, the amount, and the reason. An Adjusted Remittance Advice is sent only when there have been adjustments to the provider's payment due to overpayments.

Service Codes:

Those codes assigned to identify the type of payment being made to the provider, i.e. CS for client services and GR for grant request.

Service Cost:

The provider rate as reflected in the ABC Voucher System.

Service Unit:

One week of child care [Monday – Sunday]. A service unit may be for half-time, full-time, or less than half-time child care.

Service Voucher Log [SVL]:

A pre-printed payment request form used to process payments to providers for eligible clients.

South Carolina Department of Social Services [SCDSS]:

The administering state agency for the ABC Program and the agency responsible for administering the Welfare Reform, Family Independence Program.

Start Date:

The date services are authorized to begin by DSS or the ABC Program/Control Center staff.

Stop Date:

The last date of service authorization.

Week:

Monday through Sunday.