

Service Provision by Family Members Policy

1. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to:

- allow family members, other than parents, to be paid to provide services, and;
- clarify the conditions under which, by exception, a parent can be paid to provide services.

This policy applies to Family Support Services, At Home Program Respite, and the Supported Child Development Program.

2. POLICY

2.1 A **family member**, except a parent, may be paid to provide services without special application. A family member who is paid to provide services must comply with all program policies, procedures and standards.

2.2 A **parent** cannot be paid to provide services for their child unless an exception is approved by a program manager. A parent who is paid, by exception, to provide service must comply with all program policies, procedures and standards.

2.3 An exception may be made to pay a parent to provide funded support if the following criteria are met:

a. The request is to provide Family Support Services (including At Home Respite), or the Supported Child Development program – that MCFD would have otherwise been providing.

b. There is no appropriate or available caregiver to provide for any extraordinary or unique needs of the child, youth or family for one or more of the following reasons:

- nature and degree of care required, such as the complexity of care requiring extensive training, issues with trusting caregivers, or unique scheduling needs
- rural or remote locations causing accessibility difficulties for the child, youth or family requiring service
- cultural considerations such as customs, values, and beliefs that affect care needs
- communication barriers such as languages spoken, speech, or specialized communication needs

c. The program staff member has discussed with the family the following risks associated with paying an immediate family member including:

- the potential risk to negatively impact the health and quality of life of the child and parent;
- if the child has complex care needs and only one parent is providing care, whether that situation is realistic and appropriate, and;
- the reduction in the circle of support for the child.

d. The program manager has determined that there is a plan for provision of appropriate respite for the parent.

e. Approval for the exception to pay a parent for care is reviewed at least once per year.

- f. Approval may be withdrawn if the appropriate MCFD manager determines that the criteria no longer apply and/or the child's needs are not being met.

2.4 Government policy is based on the notion that parents have primary responsibility for providing care and support for children. Publicly funded services are intended to provide additional support, and not to replace the care expected of parents.

5. DEFINITIONS:

5.1 "Child" means a person, under age 19, including stepchildren, adoptive children

5.2 "Parent" means the parent, including step-parents, legal guardians, adoptive parents or a person living in a marriage-like relationship with the parent of the child

5.3 "Family member" means anyone, excluding a parent, who is related to the child by blood, marriage, adoption or custom adoption (e.g. sibling, grandparents, etc.)