

Background Technical Brief
New Hampshire Child Care and Development
Relevant 2017 Legislation – HB 370

Background: The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) was first authorized in 1990 via the budget act to provide child care services to low-income families who work or attend school or training.¹ The law was reauthorized in 1996 as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996.² Finally, in 2014 it was reauthorized through 2020 by the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014.³ The basic concept of the program is to provide funding (federal and state) for low-income families to use for child care so that family members can work and access educational opportunities. CCDF funds must also be used to improve the quality of child care services available to parents.

2017 Proposed Legislation – Appropriations to comply with new federal regulations governing the CCDBG: HB 370 appropriates \$7,000,000 in FY 2018 and \$8,000,000 in FY 2019 for the department of health and human services to comply with federal regulations ([final rule issued September 30, 2016](#)) governing the CCDBG.

The New Regulations: The new regulations provide for more robust safety standards and include requirements such as criminal background checks for staff in child care facilities and initial and continuous training for child care providers. The final regulations also require that states implement a robust communications plan to ensure that parents have accurate information and can make informed choices—states must maintain a consumer education website, disseminate information to parents about child care services and other service providers, and must provide the public results from monitoring inspections. The final regulations also require a minimum 12-month eligibility period (already the case in New Hampshire – this is to avoid having families receive short-term subsidies) and gradually increases the funds states must use for raising the quality of child care.

Current Program in New Hampshire: The New Hampshire department of health and human services operates the NH Child Care scholarship program. This provides scholarships to families with gross income below 250% of the federal poverty income line. Currently 5,000 families receive support through this program. Additional information available through NH Child Care Aware (<http://nh.childcareaware.org>).

¹ Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/101st-congress/house-bill/5835/text>.

² Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, available at <https://www.congress.gov/104/plaws/publ193/PLAW-104publ193.pdf>.

³ Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1086>.