

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER

ON

DACOWITS SEPTEMBER 2019 RFI 10

AIR FORCE COMMUNITY CHILD CARE FEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this paper is to provide written response to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) request for information (RFI) Ten, regarding Air Force community child care fee assistance program. This information is being provided in support of the DACOWITS projected September 2019 meeting.

BACKGROUND

- AF funded community-based fee assistance program supports Airmen living off-base in areas where on-base child care is not available or where the on-base program has an unmet demand waiting list
- Eligible families for fee assistance are active duty AF and full-time/deployed Guard/Reserve Airmen, Air Guard/Reserve technicians, Survivors of Combat Fallen Warriors and Wounded, Ill or Injured servicemembers with no access to on base military child care
- The AF fee assistance program, is called, Military Childcare In Your Neighborhood (or MCCYN), and is administered in accordance with Title 10 U.S.C. §1798 and DoDINST 6060.2 “Child Development Programs”
 - MCCYN provides subsidies to eligible providers in community child care programs to equalize the cost of commercial child care and installation child care fees

DISCUSSION

- Currently there are 3,185 children enrolled in the AF’s MCCYN and there is no waiting list
- Child Care Aware of America (CCA) is a national organization that works with state and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and other community partners to ensure all families have access to quality, affordable child care
 - CCA operates a website for AF families to submit applications for fee assistance
 - Applicant families located near a military installation must be on the base child care facilities’ waiting list, did not decline and offer of a child care space in the previous 12 months, and select a qualified program
 - Eligible community child development program providers must be nationally accredited, possess a valid state child care license, and employ staff with favorable background checks

- Eligible community Family Child Care providers must an associate degree in Child Development , an associate degree or higher in Early Childhood or Child Development, or accredited by National Association for Family Child Care
- CCA verifies eligibility, reviews supporting documentation, and provides approval for fee assistance
 - Families participating in fee assistance are required to accept a viable offer at an installation child care program
 - Fee Assistance is not denied due to funding and all eligible families are approved
- An ongoing challenge to the child care fee assistance program is availability of affordable, quality programs in the local community
 - Department of Defense is expanding MCCYN to MCCYN Plus as a pilot program to expand child care options for families in locations where accredited care is unavailable
 - Under the pilot program, licensed community child care centers participating in the state Quality Rating Improvement and Improvement System (QRIS) will be made available for military families
 - The two year pilot runs from 2019 to 2021 and is being tested in Virginia and Maryland. Results of the study will be evaluated and considered for expansion to additional states.

RECOMMENDATION: None. For information only.