



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Child Development and Early
Education

JOSH STEIN • Governor
DEVPUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary
CANDACE WITHERSPOON • Director

April 21, 2026

Dear County Directors of Social Services and Local Purchasing Agencies

Letter Number: SCCA DCDL 2026 - #03

Attention: Directors of County Departments of Social Services
Directors of Other Local Purchasing Agencies
Child Care Coordinators, Supervisors, and Managers
Other DSS Personnel who work with the Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program

Subject: County Local Policy Request

The purpose of this Dear County Director Letter is to request submission of local policies from ALL counties who have not submitted a local policy since 01/01/2026. **Only counties that have submitted an approved local policy since 01/01/2026 are exempt from this request.**

SCCA Policy

The Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA) Program Policy Manual [Chapter 10 Local Options and Waiting List Policies](#), has been revised effective 9/30/2025. To ensure all counties are in compliance with new SCCA policies, DCDEE requests that **ALL 100 counties update and submit new local policies. The DCDEE-0475 Local Policy Form is no longer an optional template.** DCDEE now requires all Local Policies to be documented and submitted using the attached [DCDEE-0475 Local Policy Form](#).

Current policy states the Local Department of Social Services/Local Purchasing Agency is required to update and submit a new local policy to DCDEE:

- At least every two (2) calendar years (signed by the director/governing board after DCDEE approval);
- Anytime the local policy is amended; or
- Anytime there are changes in the local governing board members

Local Policy Submission

Please submit new local policies no later than **June 30, 2026**, to the DCDEE Subsidy Submissions email: DCDEE.subsidy.submissions@dhhs.nc.gov. All local policies must be reviewed by the Subsidy Services Policy Unit at DCDEE for approval prior to submission to the DSS/LPA director and local governing board.

Your local plan must include:

1. The priority populations list of how children will be served when funds, child care staff or child care spaces are limited.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION

LOCATION: 1915 Health Services Way • Raleigh, NC 27607
MAILING ADDRESS: 2201 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-2200
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-814-6300 • Fax: 984-236-8222

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2. Vulnerable Populations must be included in the priority populations list. Additionally, children with special needs and families experiencing homelessness must be prioritized separately.

*(*This is a new requirement for local policy submissions and will be clarified in an upcoming release of the SCCA policy manual).*

3. How children will be pulled from the waiting list as funding, child care staff or child care spaces become available (e.g. children will be removed in chronological order or children will be removed according to their priority list).
4. If the county will or will not add to the 4% set-aside for vulnerable populations. If the county will add to the 4% set-aside, the county must state the percentage that is being set-aside.
5. How counties will handle lack of funding, as reduction in services is no longer an option. DCDEE recommends "*If child care cases are in jeopardy of termination due to potential lack of funding, the DSS/LPA will contact DCDEE for guidance*".

If you have questions about this request, please contact your Technical Assistance consultant. Thank you for your ongoing cooperation and prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Candace Witherspoon

Attachment

CW/RS