

1999 No. 3110

TAXES

**The Tax Credit (New Category of Child Care Provider)
Regulations 1999**

Made - - - - 18th November 1999

Coming into force 2nd December 1999

Whereas a draft of this instrument was laid before Parliament in accordance with section 15(5) of the Tax Credits Act 1999^(a) and approved by resolution of each House of Parliament;

Now, therefore, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 15(1) and 15(4) of the Tax Credits Act 1999, hereby makes the following Regulations:

Citation, extent and commencement

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Tax Credit (New Category of Child Care Provider) Regulations 1999 and shall come into force on the fourteenth day after the day on which they were made.

(2) Paragraph (3) below applies if, before these Regulations come into force, the functions of the Secretary of State under section 15 of the Tax Credits Act 1999 in relation to the accreditation of organisations in accordance with criteria determined by or under a scheme made under that section have become vested in the National Assembly for Wales by virtue of an Order made under section 22 of the Government of Wales Act 1998^(b).

(3) Where this paragraph applies, references in these regulations to the Secretary of State shall be read in relation to Wales as references to the National Assembly for Wales.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

“accredited” in relation to an organisation means accredited by the Secretary of State in accordance with the criteria set out in these Regulations;

“child care provider” means a person who looks after one or more children over the age of seven and under the age of fifteen (under the age of sixteen if the child is disabled) for reward on domestic premises, or a person who provides day care for such children on premises (other than domestic premises) for a period, or for a total of the periods during which children are looked after in any day, exceeding two hours;

(a) 1999 c.10.

(b) 1998 c.38.

“disabled” in relation to a child under the age of sixteen means, a child—

- (a) in respect of whom disability living allowance is payable, or has ceased to be payable solely because he is a patient within the meaning of regulation 10 of the Disability Working Allowance (General) Regulations 1991(a);
- (b) who is registered as blind in a register compiled by a local authority under section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948(b) (welfare services) or, in Scotland, has been certified as blind and in consequence he is registered as blind in a register maintained by or on behalf of a regional or islands council; or
- (c) who ceased to be registered as blind in such a register within the 28 weeks immediately preceding the date of claim;

“disabled person’s tax credit” shall be construed in accordance with section 1(1) of the Tax Credits Act 1999;

“system” means the quality assurance system operated by an accredited organisation for assessing the quality of child care provided and for approving such child care for the purposes of determining the amount of working families’ tax credit or disabled person’s tax credit available to users of such child care;

“working families’ tax credit” shall be construed in accordance with section 1(1) of the Tax Credits Act 1999.

(2) Except where the context otherwise requires, any reference in these Regulations to a regulation or Schedule is a reference to a regulation contained herein or to a Schedule hereto, any reference in a regulation or Schedule to a paragraph is a reference to a paragraph of the regulation or Schedule, and any reference in a paragraph to a sub-paragraph is a reference to a sub-paragraph thereof.

Scheme for new category of child care providers

3. These Regulations establish a scheme for establishing a new category of persons whose charges for providing child care are to be taken into account for the purposes of determining the appropriate amount of working families’ tax credit or disabled person’s tax credit for the purposes of section 15 of the Tax Credits Act 1999.

Requirements for the scheme

4. No person shall fall within the new category unless he is approved by an accredited organisation.

Criteria for accreditation

5. The Secretary of State shall accredit an organisation for the purposes of the scheme if in his opinion it satisfies the following criteria—

- (a) it operates a system for approving child care providers that meets the requirements set out in regulation 6 and is satisfactory to the Secretary of State;
- (b) it has the ability to ensure the quality of child care provided by persons which it approves;
- (c) it satisfies such other conditions relating to the system as the Secretary of State considers necessary and expedient; and
- (d) it operates an equal opportunities policy for its employees, in relation to the services it provides, to the quality assurance scheme and to the training of assessors.

Requirements of the system

6. The system shall include the matters set out in the First Schedule.

(a) S.I. 1991/2887.

(b) 1948 c.29.

Application for accreditation

7. An organisation seeking accreditation shall apply to the Secretary of State in a form substantially corresponding to that set out in Part I of the Second Schedule, containing the information therein specified and dated and authenticated by the signature of a duly authorised officer of the organisation.

Grant of accreditation

8.—(1) Subject to the following paragraphs of this regulation, where an organisation applies to the Secretary of State for accreditation he may—

- (a) reject the application, or
- (b) grant the accreditation on such conditions, if any, as he thinks necessary or expedient.

(2) Before making a decision in accordance with paragraph (1), the Secretary of State may require further evidence from the organisation, and may consult any person as he thinks fit.

(3) Before rejecting an application under paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall advise the organisation in writing that he is minded not to accredit the organisation, giving his reasons, and inviting the organisation to make representations in support of its application within 28 days after the notification is issued.

(4) The Secretary of State shall consider any representations made by the organisation before making his decision under paragraph (1).

(5) Where the Secretary of State is minded to grant accreditation in principle under paragraph (1)(b), he shall notify the organisation in writing that he is minded to grant the accreditation on the conditions set out in the notification.

(6) When the organisation receives a notice issued under paragraph (5) it shall within 28 days either

- (a) advise the Secretary of State in writing that it accepts the conditions proposed;
or
- (b) make representations in support of its objections to the conditions proposed.

(7) The Secretary of State shall consider any representation made by the organisation about the conditions, before he makes his decision under paragraph (1).

(8) When the Secretary of State makes his decision under paragraph (1) he shall notify the organisation concerned in writing.

(9) When the Secretary of State decides to accredit an organisation, the notice in writing issued under paragraph (8) shall specify the conditions of accreditation, and a copy of the notice of accreditation shall be sent to the Inland Revenue.

(10) Accreditation shall be for a period of three years and shall be conditional upon the organisation continuing to meet the conditions and criteria for accreditation.

Renewal of accreditation

9.—(1) If an accredited organisation wishes to renew its accreditation it must, during the period of two months prior to the expiry of its accreditation, make an application to renew in a form substantially corresponding to that set out in Parts I and II of the Second Schedule.

(2) Where an organisation applies to the Secretary of State for renewal of an accreditation he may—

- (a) reject the application, or
- (b) grant the accreditation on such conditions, if any, as he thinks fit.

(3) The Secretary of State shall follow the procedures set out in regulation 8(2) to (8) when making his decision, and may vary the conditions imposed on the accreditation.

(4) Any renewed accreditation shall be for a period of three years from the expiry of the earlier accreditation, and shall be conditional upon the organisation continuing to meet the conditions and criteria for accreditation.

(5) Until the determination of an application under paragraph (1), the accreditation shall continue in force, notwithstanding that apart from this paragraph it would expire earlier.

Withdrawal of accreditation or variation of conditions of accreditation

10.—(1) Subject to the following paragraphs of this regulation, the Secretary of State may withdraw accreditation or vary the conditions of accreditation if he is satisfied that—

- (a) the organisation no longer meets the criteria for accreditation set out in regulation 5; or
- (b) the organisation has acted improperly.

(2) The Secretary of State shall notify the organisation in writing if he is minded to withdraw the accreditation or vary the conditions of accreditation, giving his reasons and inviting the organisation to make representations within 28 days after the notice is issued.

(3) The Secretary of State shall consider any representation before making his decision under paragraph (1).

(4) When the Secretary of State makes his decision under paragraph (1), he shall notify the organisation concerned in writing.

(5) If the decision is to withdraw the accreditation or vary the conditions of accreditation, such decision shall become effective 28 days after the date on which the organisation is informed of the decision, but otherwise the decision shall take effect when it is made.

(6) If the Secretary of State is of the opinion that it is necessary to suspend the organisation's accreditation for the period during which he is considering withdrawing the accreditation or varying the conditions of accreditation, he may do so, provided that he has notified the organisation of this in the notice issued under paragraph (2).

(7) If the accreditation is suspended in accordance with paragraph (6), the organisation shall not approve any child care providers during the period of the suspension, without prejudice to the validity of approvals already given.

Requirements during the period of accreditation

11. During the period for which an organisation is accredited that organisation shall—

- (a) provide, to the Inland Revenue or to the Secretary of State, such information as is requested about child care providers that it has approved under its system for the purposes of checking eligibility for child care tax credit or for insuring the effective operation of the system;
- (b) maintain adequate records about the approval process it operates, including evidence supplied by child care providers seeking approval under the system, which shall be produced, on request, to the Secretary of State;
- (c) allow the Secretary of State or his nominee to attend meetings of the panel awarding approval to child care providers, and to accompany assessors on visits to child care providers during the process of assessment and on any subsequent checks once the provider is approved under the system.

Requirements during the period of approval

12. During the period for which he is approved by an accredited organisation a child care provider shall allow quality assessors and representatives of the accredited organisation, of the Secretary of State and of the Inland Revenue access at any reasonable time to the child care provider's premises and records.

Consequences for child care providers approved by organisation when accreditation is withdrawn or expires

13.—(1) When an organisation's accreditation is withdrawn or expires without being renewed the Secretary of State may, by notice, substitute an alternative accredited organisation to replace the organisation which no longer has a valid accreditation.

(2) The child care provider who has been approved by the organisation that no longer has a valid accreditation shall retain his approval for the remainder of the period of approval, unless the Secretary of State is of the opinion that such approval was improperly granted.

(3) Where the Secretary of State is of such an opinion he shall serve a notice on the child care provider terminating the approval.

Criteria for approval of child care provider

14. An accredited organisation shall approve a child care provider who meets the criteria set out in the system, which criteria shall include those matters set out in the Third Schedule.

Grant to accredited organisation

15. The Secretary of State may make payments by way of grant or otherwise to an accredited organisation in respect of costs incurred by the organisation in carrying out its functions.

18th November 1999

Margaret Hodge
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Department for Education and Employment

THE SYSTEM

Matters that shall be dealt with in the system

The system shall—

- establish an awarding panel, including members independent of the organisation and an independent expert with experience of out of school child care provision for children over the age of seven, to approve child care providers;
- set out the criteria, including those matters set out in the Third Schedule, to be met by child care providers in order for them to be approved;
- set out the procedures for applying for approval including the documentary evidence required to demonstrate that the criteria are met;
- providers for a quality assessor to assess the extent to which the criteria are met by the child care provider including by visiting the premises and interviewing staff, parents and children as he sees fit;
- ensure that any quality assessor has been properly trained in the requirements of the system;
- ensure that a quality assessor does not and has not worked in any way with any child care provider he assesses (other than in assessing the quality of child care provided), and that he has not entered into any financial arrangement with the child care provider being assessed other than any payment to cover the costs of the assessment;
- provide for the awarding panel to approve or reject an application for approval after considering the evidence provided by the applicant and the report of the quality assessor and such other information as it thinks fit;
- provide for a method of appeal against any refusal to approve a child care provider involving independent arbitration;
- fix a period of time (not exceeding two years) for which any approval will last;
- provide written confirmation of any approval granted together with confirmation of the period for which approval lasts and the reference number allocated to that child care provider;
- provide a complaints procedure under which all complaints will be investigated and if necessary, approval will be withdrawn;
- include a requirement that any complaints about approved child care providers are to be referred to the accredited organisation.

THE SECOND SCHEDULE

THE APPLICATION

PART I

THE INITIAL APPLICATION

1. Background information on organisation with evidence of status and commitment to equality of opportunity.
2. Description of the system.
3. Details of the training of independent quality assessors.
4. Membership of the awarding panel.
5. Details of any charges levied on child care providers.

PART II

THE RENEWAL

1. Details of all child care providers who have been approved during the period of approval.
2. Details of any appeals against refusal to grant approval of a child care provider.
3. Details of any complaints received about approved child care providers.
4. Identification of any changes proposed to the system.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The child care provider shall—

- (1) ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children cared for, and shall comply with all relevant health and safety legislation;
- (2) employ sufficient staff who are adequately trained and suitable to work with children;
- (3) offer a planned programme of supervised activities that reflect the developmental needs of the children being cared for;
- (4) operate an equal opportunities policy for parents, children and staff;
- (5) agree to allow quality assessors and representatives of the accredited organisation, of the Secretary of State and of the Inland Revenue access at any reasonable time to the child care provider's premises and records.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations make a scheme for establishing a new category of persons whose charges for providing child care are to be taken into account for the purposes of determining the appropriate amount of working families' tax credit or disabled person's tax credit. The persons whose charges will be taken into account for these purposes will be approved by an organisation that has been accredited by the Secretary of State.

The scheme establishes—

- (a) the criteria to be met by any organisation seeking accreditation to approve child care providers (regulation 5);
- (b) the requirements of the system operated by the accredited organisation (regulation 6 and the First Schedule);
- (c) the form of application for accreditation (regulation 7 and the Second Schedule);
- (d) the process for granting and refusing accreditation (regulation 8);
- (e) the process for renewing accreditation (regulation 9);
- (f) the process for withdrawing accreditation or varying conditions of accreditation (regulation 10);
- (g) the requirements on the accredited organisation during the period of accreditation (regulation 11);
- (h) the requirements on the approved child care provider during the period of his approval (regulation 12);
- (i) the consequences of withdrawal of accreditation from an accredited organisation (regulation 13);
- (j) the criteria for approval of a child care provider (regulation 14 and the Third Schedule); and
- (k) the ability for the Secretary of State to make payments to accredited organisations (regulation 15).

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