CCDF Policies Database:
Providing Basic Information for Subsidy Research

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Data and Measurement Challenges in Conducting Subsidy Research
Some Researchers Who May Need Data on CCDF Policies

- Quantitative researcher doing a cross-state, cross-time analysis with secondary data

- Qualitative researcher who needs the history of policies in one place

- Modeler who is estimating how many families are eligible for subsidies
Existing Data on CCDF Policies

• Annual data from the “Report of State Plans” on key elements of plans
• Periodic information from NWLC on various aspects of policies
• But no data source that is:
  – Cross-state, AND
  – Cross-time, AND
  – Has detailed policies
The CCDF Policies Database

- Funded by HHS/ACF
- A five year project through September 2013
- Policies from Oct. 2005 forward
- Policies for 50 states, DC, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands
- First data available in mid-2010
Today’s Talk

• Overview of the CCDF Policies Database
• What information will be in the CCDF Policies Database
• How we’ll obtain and check the information
• Examples of research uses
Key Design Features of the Database

• Code policies that have been implemented

• Capture changes across time

• Capture key county-level variation

• Capture different treatment of different kinds of families (special-needs, TANF, etc.)
“Boundary” of the Database

Policies for the key programs that are funded partly or fully with CCDF money, and that subsidize the cost of care for individual children/families.
Policies/Programs that are Outside the Scope of the Database

• Head Start and state-funded pre-k
• Programs funded entirely with non-CCDF funds
• Programs funded with CCDF but serving small sub-populations
• Details on CCDF-funded quality activities
Guidelines for the Database Content

• Useful for most policymakers, researchers, and/or administrators
• Available from the State Plans, attachments, and/or written policy manuals/documents
• Able to be coded with acceptable consistency across states/areas
• Does not duplicate information available elsewhere at same level of detail
Categories of Policies: Policies Related to Families

• Eligibility
• Application and verification
• Redetermination and changes in family circumstances
• Terms of authorization
• Priorities and waiting lists
• Copayments & other payment policies
Categories, cont.: Policies Related to Providers

• Reimbursement rates
• Requirements for receiving subsidies
• Documentation and on-site visits
• Overpayments and fraud
• Requirements for unregulated providers
  – Basic eligibility, background checks
  – Training requirements
  – Health and safety requirements
Categories, cont.:
Policies coded from the State Plans

• Key non-text data on:
  – Administration
  – Program development
  – Quality
  – Early learning guidelines
  – Professional development
  – Consultation / coordination
Not in the Database

• Legislative proposals
• Policies that have been agreed-upon but not implemented
• Tribal policies
• Policies that would require different documents
Example of Level of Detail: Eligibility sub-topics

- Children’s age limits
- Parent/guardian activities that confer eligibility
- Definition of work – minimum hours
- Groups with automatic eligibility
- Definition of family (step-parents, older siblings)
- Income definition (disregards, deductions)
- Eligibility thresholds—in initial, continuing, and variations across areas of a state
- Assets tests
Process

• Collect materials (ongoing)

• Project staff review and code materials

• Internal review

• Create draft tables

• Verification with state staff

• Finalize data and tables
How We’ll Disseminate the Information

• A printed “Databook”

• On-line access to tables

• Access to full Database detail
A Few Ways the Database Could be Used in Research

• “Right hand side” variables for statistical analysis of survey data (SIPP, etc.)
  – Example: What policies are related to cross-state, cross-time changes in female labor force partic.?

• Analysis of CCDF characteristics data (801)
  – Example: What policies are related to cross-state differences in percent of caseload that receives subsidies due to education/training?

• Participation-rate analysis (survey & admin.):
  – How many families pass their state’s criteria for eligibility for CCDF?
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