

## CCEC Administrative Rule Briefing

**Title/OAR #:** Relief Nursery/Under development  
**Date:** June 13, 2016  
**Program Name:** Relief Nursery Contracted Services  
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**Statutory Authority:** ORS 326.425(7)

☐ Temporary Rule    ☒ New Rule    ☐ Amend Existing Rule    ☐ Repeal Rule  
**Prompted by:** ☐ State law changes    ☐ Federal law changes    ☐ Other

**Last Revised:** By Commission on Children and Families: OAR 423-045-0101 to 0185 & 423-010-0024(8)

**Action Requested:**

☐ Adoption of Temporary Rule    ☒ Adoption of Final Rule

### Program Summary:

Relief nurseries work to improve the well-being of Oregon's young children, ages 0-6, and their families by reducing and mitigating risk factors associated with child abuse and neglect and their effects on the child and family. This is accomplished by providing a range of therapeutic early childhood and family support services designed to maximize family strengths and address their specific needs.

Certain risk factors have been correlated with increased risk for child abuse and neglect, and the number of risk factors present in a family is a critical element that can lead to abuse and neglect. A recent study by the Center for Evidence-based Policy identified parental risk factors – including psychiatric risk/history, family structure/marital status, prenatal substance abuse, low birth weight -- as the factors with the strongest power to predict foster care entry. Research shows that when protective factors are well-established in a family, the likelihood of child abuse and neglect diminishes. Protective factors build family strengths and a family environment that stimulates optimal child development. The five (5) protective factors promoted by relief nurseries are: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children.

Through an assortment of services that aim to build strong, nurturing families and healthy children, relief nurseries work to reduce child maltreatment and reduce the need for foster care placements. Relief nurseries work to ensure that children are safe by maximizing appropriate child developmental levels; increasing parenting skills; and, improving family functioning. These outcomes are consistent with the Oregon Early Learning system goals of ensuring: 1) children enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed; children are raised in stable and attached families; and 3) services and systems are aligned and coordinated.

### Eligible Population:

Relief nurseries provide a unique array of comprehensive family support services that are easily accessible to low-income parents with children up to six years of age who are at high risk for abuse

or neglect. Research clearly shows that assistance in the first few years of a child's life - before behaviors are indelibly imprinted - has the greatest success in breaking abusive patterns.

### **Population Served:**

Populations served through the relief nursery model are single-parent families, parents with children up to six years of age and children and families who are at high risk for abuse or neglect.

### **Stakeholders Impacted:**

The stakeholders who are impacted are the relief nurseries and the families and children to whom they provide services within their service areas and local communities. Additional stakeholders include providers, who collectively make up the local early learning system that serves children and families. The Early Learning Hubs are also stakeholders.

### **Need for Rule:**

Prior to 2012, the State Commission on Children & Families had authority for rule promulgation for Relief nurseries. Funds allocated to relief nurseries by the Commission were treated as grant funds with the Commission serving as a pass-through agency. Since 2012, the Early Learning Council (ELC) has been charged with oversight of early learning programs.

In 2013, the Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education was created and is overseen by the Early Learning Council. The Early Learning Division is currently engaged in work to operationalize the support and monitoring of the services delivered to children and families through Relief nurseries. A part of that will be the promulgation of Oregon Administrative Rules to govern contracts.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

The fiscal impact is unknown at this time. Analysis of fiscal impact of any proposed rules will be assessed through the rule promulgation process, which includes an analysis of financial impacts of the rules to stakeholders, to small business (defined as a business that is independently owned and operated with 50 or fewer employees) or to local government.

### **Equity Analysis:**

#### **➤ Who are the racial/ethnic and underserved groups affected?**

Those affected are the underserved communities where disparity exists in Oregon. Strength-based approaches and asset-based mindsets will support efforts to operationalize equity. The Early Learning Division recognizes that in order for each and every child and family to learn and thrive, we have to provide differentiated, person-centered resources and support.

The Early Learning Division supports culturally responsive services that are respectful of and relevant to the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse consumer / client populations and communities. Cultural responsiveness describes the capacity to respond to the issues of diverse communities. It thus requires knowledge and capacity at different levels of intervention: systemic, organizational, professional and individual.

- **Do the proposed rules ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?** Unknown at this time.
- **What is the impact of the rules on eliminating the opportunity gap?** There is a positive impact as children receive counseling and therapeutic classrooms that are developmentally appropriate, organized and individualized for each child. Parents receive outreach, counseling and parent engagement services.
- **What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g., mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)** Barriers to more equitable outcomes may include continued legislative funding and continued efforts to ensure alignment of deliverables through contracts with the Early Learning Division (ELD).
- **How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected?** Work is needed in this area. Local relief nurseries involve their local community through meetings, conferences and their board members. Board members represent the local community.
- **How will you modify or enhance strategies and rules to ensure each learner and communities' individual and cultural needs are met?** Relief nursery directors have been trained on how to use the Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity. The goal of the equity self-assessment tool is to help organizations reflect on their current processes and practices, and develop a service plan that gives children and families equitable access to supportive learning environments. While initial efforts are underway, there remains a lot of work to be done in this area.