

PROVIDER BUSINESS PROCEDURES

Level **C**

The South Carolina
ABC Child Care Program

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1-800-262-4416

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INTRODUCTION

These policies and procedures were developed as a guide for the operating practices of the payment, documentation, and reporting system for the ABC Child Care Program, hereafter referred to as the ABC Program. Upon notification to providers, the DSS, at its sole discretion, may amend these policies and procedures. Once notified in writing, the provider shall be responsible for compliance to the amended policy and procedure for the purpose defined. Provider compliance will help to ensure timely and proper payment.

THE PROVIDER MUST REVIEW THESE PROCEDURES SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS REQUIRED.

PROCEDURES

1. PROVIDER SELECTION

Before any provider can be authorized to serve a client, as a Level C provider, the provider must complete the following forms in order to be enrolled as a provider in the ABC Child Care Program for payment.

- Level C Provider Enrollment Form
- Level C Provider Agreement (Must be completed every three years from initial enrollment)
- Level C Provider Rate Form
- IRS Form W-9
- IRS Form Ltr. 147-C or 554 if provider uses FEIN # or copy of Social Security card if provider uses SSN.
- Copy of SC Drivers' License or SC State ID, if operating under a SSN.

The provider must review all forms for accuracy, sign where applicable and return to the ABC Control Center. **Payment to a provider cannot begin until these forms are approved and keyed.**

New forms should be completed if any information regarding the provider's facility changes, i.e., address, facility or license capacity, etc.

Parental Choice

The ABC Program advocates parental choice, and clients are responsible for selecting the provider of their choice.

A new client or a client already receiving services at a provider, who wants to transfer to a new provider may choose you as their child care provider. When a client chooses you to care for their child(ren), you should:

(Refer to section 7, Transfer, for more detailed information)

- a. See at least one acceptable ID of the client to ensure proper identification.
- b. Complete, along with the client, the blue client connection card or client connection fax form and mail to the ABC Control Center or fax to 1-800-310-5417, in order to connect the client to their program and initiate the payment process for that client. The provider may receive the blue connection card or fax form from the ABC Control Center or from the parent to obtain authorization to begin services to the client. This must be done in time to receive approval before serving the client.

DO NOT SERVE THE CLIENT BEFORE RECEIVING WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE ABC PROGRAM! IF YOU DO, THE ABC PROGRAM WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The provider cannot accept a child for a care type (age group) for which they have not been authorized. A provider may be authorized for full-time care type, but not half-time, etc. If providers are unsure as to the care types for which they are authorized, they should call the ABC Control Center. Care types may be added at the provider's request and upon determination by the ABC Control Center that the program meets requirements.

- c. Upon receipt of the Connection card or fax, the ABC Control Center will verify that the client is eligible to receive services, and that the provider is enrolled to serve the care type requested. The ABC Control Center will then authorize the provider to serve the client (if the client has complied with transfer procedures) and make the necessary "connection" in the system with an established start date.
- d. The provider, along with the client, will receive an "Authorization/Connection Letter" confirming the connection, mailed by the ABC Control Center. The letter will include information such as the authorization date, provider billing rate, client fee, care type authorized and number of weeks of care.
THIS IS THE PROVIDER'S AUTHORIZATION LETTER. THE PROVIDER MUST NOT SERVE THE CLIENT BEFORE RECEIVING THE AUTHORIZATION LETTER WITH THE APPROVED DATE.
SPECIAL NOTE: If the clients fail to attend the child care program for 10 consecutive days after authorization is given, the provider must notify the ABC Control Center on the 11th day and discontinue billing.

2. MAXIMUM CARE ALLOWED

Clients can receive up to a maximum of 52 weeks of care during any one-year period of eligibility. This may be full-time care, part-time or a combination of the two. The number of weeks approved and the type of care is determined at client eligibility.

Note: Less than half-time care may be in conjunction with full or half-time care and may be used alone. It cannot be used to pay the same child care provider.

3. ABSENCES

Each child is allowed a certain number of absences based on the number of weeks of care that is authorized. The maximum allowable days a child can be absent is 31 days, which is allocated only when weeks of care is authorized. If a child is authorized for less than 52 weeks of care, they will receive a pro-rated share of allowable absences based on the number of weeks of service they receive. All absences must be documented. If a child is absent, a zero must be entered on the SVL. (Must indicate actual absences and reason codes.)

- a. The ABC Program will pay the weekly rate for the child when absences occur. However, once the child has exceeded the allowable absences, the child may be terminated by the ABC Control Center with the provider receiving written notification. If absences are for an illness, the ABC Control Center must receive a doctor's statement, prior to the effective termination date, in order for the absences to be waived.
- b. If a child misses 10 consecutive days without a waiver, the provider must discontinue billing and notify the ABC Control Center. If the child returns to the provider on the 11th day, the provider may bill for the 10 consecutive days of absences and submit those days as absences. If the child does not return, services will terminate on the Sunday following the 10th consecutive absence. You must indicate on the SVL the last date attended (drop/transfer) and the last date you expect payment (pay until).

NOTE: If the child does not return on the 11th day and payment is rendered past the 10 days of absences, the amount of over-payment will be deducted from the provider's check.

- c. You should enter "0" for the number of hours attended in the hours box and you must enter the appropriate absence (ABS) code in the ABS code box. You will see the absence reason codes under the service dates box at the top of the SVL or in the drop down box if you are on-line. Failure to record the total hours attended and/or the absence reason code, will result in your SVL being returned to you and will delay your payment.

EXAMPLE: A parent may work three 12-hour shifts on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and decide to keep the child home on Wednesday and Friday. The child would not be considered absent on Wednesday or Friday because they don't normally attend on these days; however, if the child failed to attend on the other days, they would be considered absent. The provider must discuss the child's schedule and agree on an arrangement with the parent upon accepting the child.

4. PAYMENT

A. Service Voucher Log (SVL)

The Service Voucher Log (SVL) is the official payment document for the ABC Child Care Program used to request reimbursement of child care services provided to eligible children participating in the ABC Child Care Program. Enrolled ABC Child Care providers may choose to receive either the paper version of the SVL or enroll in the On-line SVL system. To participate in the On-Line SVL system, the provider must be an active, enrolled child care provider in the ABC Child Care Program and must call the ABC Child Care Program Control Center at 1-800-262-4416 to request the change from the paper SVL to the On-line SVL.

The SVL (both paper and On-line) is a pre-populated document that lists the children for whom payment is due, any applicable registration fees, and the weekly reimbursement rate per child. Child care providers are required to verify on the SVL that they served the children, record the actual hours attended (total hours) per day, record any absences and select the correct absence code, and insert a drop/transfer and pay until date if a child no longer attends the facility.

B. Initial Service Voucher Log

When a client selects an enrolled ABC child care provider, the first SVL will generate when that initial connection has been made. The SVL's generate during the nightly batch process.

A new SVL is generated with each payment that is made and will continue to generate as long as there are active connections which have not paid to the provider.

C. General Payment Information

- You must complete and send in the SVL in order to be paid.
- As soon as you get the SVL, review it carefully. You must record hours attended (whole hours) or, if absent, you must record "0" and the reason code for each absence in the ABS code box.
- You must sign and mail the original copy of the SVL back to the address on the SVL or submit your SVL via the On-line SVL system.
NOTE: Your SVL cannot be submitted prior to the ending date of the SVL.
EXAMPLE: If the week of 10/03/11 through 10/09/11 appears on your SVL, you cannot submit your SVL prior to 10/09/11.
- You must keep a copy of the submitted SVL for your records.
- Payment is expected to take from 10 to 14 working days from the date the ABC Program receives the original, completed, signed SVL or the electronic version of the SVL. Providers are required to wait until after the 14th working day before calling about reimbursement.
- The provider may call the ABC Control Center (1-800-262-4416) with questions regarding payment or transactions that did not process.
- If a child misses an entire week, illness, etc., you may ask to be paid for the week. You are required to record "0" in the hour's box and you must enter the appropriate absence code in the ABS code box on the SVL.
- If you are not able to care for the child(ren) for an entire week, you may not be paid for that week. The child may need to go to another child care provider and the ABC Program will not pay two child care providers for the same week of care. You must contact the ABC Control Center at 1-800-262-4416 in advance with this information.

When you get your payment, your next SVL will come with a “Remittance Advice” that tells you which child has been paid for or if you have not been paid for a child. The following describes three types of “Remittance Advice” statements a provider will or can receive with each payment:

- a. Paid Provider Remittance Advice: This will be received with each check. The Paid Remittance Advice will identify the client, child and payment amount for each transaction on the submitted SVL which make up the check total. Providers are to match the Paid Remittance Advice against the provider’s copy of the SVL to ensure proper payment for each transaction.
- b. Rejected Remittance Advice: This may be included. It identifies the children who were not paid for and the reason.
- c. Adjusted Remittance Advice: This may also be included, if funds were deducted from the provider’s check. Funds can be deducted if an overpayment occurred.

5. PROVIDER RATE CHANGES

a. Rate Increases

Providers who increase their child care rates may request a rate increase form at any time.

- The provider must call the ABC Control Center and request a Rate Change Form.
- The form is completed by the provider and returned with the required documentation.
- Once approved, the rate increase will not immediately take effect for those clients currently being served by the provider. The payment rate will remain the same until the client’s eligibility period is renewed. If the client continues to select the provider, then the new payment rate will be effective for the client with the date of their new eligibility period.

EXCEPTION: Foster children are the only clients immediately connected at the new rate.

- Any new clients selecting the provider on or after the date of the rate increase will be paid at the new rate.
- If the provider charges more than the maximum allowed by the ABC Program, only the maximum will be paid. The provider may require the client to pay the difference between their rate and the maximum paid.

b. Rate Decreases

Providers who decrease their rates **must** notify the ABC Control Center and request a Rate Change Form.

- The same procedures as outlined in Rate Increases will be followed with the exception that all rate decreases will be effective immediately for all children.

6. CLIENT FEES

The client fee is based on family size and income and is determined by the ABC Program. **The provider is responsible for the collection of client fees in advance of service delivery and documenting that those fees are paid in a timely manner.** The ABC Program assumes no responsibility for collection or payment of client fees.

Foster parents and clients participating in the Family Independence Program do not pay client fees. However, they are responsible for the difference between the provider’s rate and the maximum rate paid by the ABC Program, if the provider’s rate exceeds the maximum amount.

- a. The client fee is to be collected weekly in advance of service delivery. ****Providers should not let clients get behind on their weekly fees. (Refer to the Special Note under Client Transfer – section 7.)**

- b. The provider may discontinue services to the client when client fees are not paid and the provider must inform the ABC Control Center before discontinuing services to a client for failure to pay the client fee.

7. CLIENT TRANSFER

Clients may transfer from one provider to another.

- a. Clients must notify the ABC Control Center either by telephone or in writing and receive approval **prior** to the transfer.
- b. Clients may be required to adhere to the provider's **established** policy for notification of transfer.
- c. The effective date of the transfer will be the 1st Monday following the 7th working day after the ABC Control Center receives the telephone call or written notice from the client requesting the transfer. To determine the effective date of transfer, the day the ABC Control Center receives the telephone call or written notice is considered day one of the notice (see Exception). Then begin counting seven working days from that date. In counting the seven days, do not include state observed holidays (i.e., Fourth of July, Labor Day, etc.) or weekends, as they are not considered working days. Whatever date the 7th working day falls on, the transfer date will be the first Monday after that date.
EXAMPLE: Request is made on Wednesday. Counting seven working days beginning with Wednesday, the 7th working day would fall on Thursday of the next week. The transfer date would be the next Monday following that Thursday.
EXCEPTION: If notification is received on a Thursday, then Friday is counted as day one. If notification is received any other day of the week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday), that same day is always counted as day one.
- d. Notice may be waived under unusual circumstances if requested by the client and approved by the ABC Control Center. The ABC Control Center will notify providers, in writing, if waivers are approved.
- e. The previous provider will not be paid after the start date is established for the new provider. **THE ABC PROGRAM WILL NOT PAY TWO PROVIDERS FOR THE SAME WEEK.**
- f. The previous provider will be notified in writing via a transfer letter of the client's last authorized day of service.
****SPECIAL NOTE: Clients with unpaid fees at the time of the transfer will still be allowed to transfer. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure client fees are paid timely.**

8. RECORDS

These records are required to be kept on-site and will be reviewed by DSS. Providers should establish good record keeping methods and maintain all documentation in an orderly fashion. Records shall be maintained on site for a period of three years, however if the case is in an audit, it must be retained through the completion of the audit.

a. Attendance

- Daily attendance records must be maintained for each child served through the ABC Program.
- Attendance may be documented in several different ways by recording days of attendance and days of absences on a roll book or log sheet to include the USDA Log sheet, or sign-in/sign-out sheets or computer logs, etc.
IMPORTANT NOTE: If the provider uses sign-in/sign-out sheets, and the parents fail to sign-in and also sign-out, the DSS Auditors may recoup funds.
NOTE: Actual hours attended in whole hours or if absent "0" in hours section and the appropriate ABS code must be reported to the ABC Control Center via the SVL. The child's name on the attendance log must match the name on the SVL. Use the child's given name, not a nickname.
- Records must match the absences reported on the SVL submitted for the period.

PROVIDERS MUST ACCURATELY REPORT ALL ABSENCES ON THE SVL INDICATING THE "0" HOURS ATTENDED AND ABS REASON CODE FOR THE ABSENCE AND ACTUAL NUMBER OF HOURS ATTENDED DAILY (WHOLE HOURS).

- **Providers who do not maintain daily attendance or accurate records may be required to repay funds if the provider cannot provide documentation that the child attended the program.**
- b. **Service Voucher Log (SVL)**
- The providers must maintain paper copies of the submitted SVL on-site for a period of three years for audit purposes. The original is mailed to the ABC Program. Provider must keep a copy for their records.
 - The providers must review the SVL against the Provider's Remittance Advice. An explanation of the different Remittance Advice statements are noted in Section 4, Payment.
- c. **Client/Child Records**
- An individual file should be kept on-site for each child enrolled through the ABC Program. Information should include, but not be limited to, the following:
- Parent's name, child's complete name (especially if last name is different than parent), Social Security number of parent
 - It is helpful to cross-reference each child's file with other children from the same family, especially when the last names are different
 - ABC Authorization/Connection Letter – describes the client's name and name of the child, amount of billing, start and stop dates, client fee amount (if applicable) and type of care OR
 - Any correspondence from the ABC Program related to the client.

9. CHANGES TO A LEVEL C PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

A provider's file can be changed at any time. A change can be initiated by the provider and/or the ABC Control Center.

The provider must notify the ABC Control Center if changes need to be made to their enrollment.

**** PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY CHANGES WITH YOUR SVL.**

Changes may occur for, but are not limited to, the following reasons:

A. Provider Moves

If the provider **MOVES** to another facility, the following must occur:

- The provider must notify the ABC Control Center as soon as possible, but no later than 15 days prior to the move.
- **The provider must serve children only at the facility enrolled.** When a provider moves, the License/Registration becomes invalid, and the provider must obtain a new License/Registration for the new location.
- If regulatory requirements are met, the provider's enrollment is amended, and the provider will be allowed to serve the children at the new facility.
- If the provider does not meet regulatory requirements at the new facility, the enrollment will be terminated.

B. Provider Sells

If the provider **SELLS** their child care business, the following must occur:

- **The provider must notify the ABC Control Center within 30 days of the sale.**

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: It is extremely crucial to notify the ABC Control Center of the sale of the facility so that payment under the provider's Tax ID number can be stopped. If the provider fails to do this and the new owner continues to receive the SVLs and submits them, payment will continue to be made under the provider's Tax ID, and thus **they are responsible** for payment of taxes due. The ABC Program cannot be held responsible when providers fail to notify the ABC Program of the sale. Providers should not send this notification in with their last SVL, but must call or write the ABC Program directly.

- The provider's enrollment will be terminated effective with the date of the sale, or the date the provider ceases providing services to clients, if that date is before the sale date.

C. Adding or Deleting Additional Age Group

Providers can request to add another age group(s) not previously authorized.

- Providers must contact the ABC Control Center to request an additional age group be added.
- Providers must meet regulatory requirements for age group(s) served.
- Providers can request to add half-time or full-time for an age group for which they are already authorized.
- Providers should request to delete an age group if they are no longer serving an age group or do not want to be authorized for that age group.
- The ABC Program may delete an age group if it is determined that the provider is no longer serving that age group or is not meeting regulatory requirements for that age group.

D. Change in Facility's Regulatory Status

The provider must notify the ABC Control Center if one of the following occurs:

- If provider changes from Family to Group.
- If provider changes from Family or Group to a Center.
- If provider changes from a Group to a Family.
- If provider changes from Center to a Family or Group.

The provider must notify the ABC Control Center immediately if their registration or license is revoked or the application for renewal is denied by DSS.

E. Facility Becomes Accredited or Loses Accreditation

When a facility is accredited by a DSS approved accrediting agency, the provider should:

- Notify the ABC Control Center and submit documentation of accreditation.
- If the facility is accredited and loses the accreditation, the provider must notify the ABC Control Center immediately.

F. Change in Name of Child Care Facility

If the provider changes the name of the child care facility they must:

- Notify the ABC Control Center in writing.
- Submit a signed W-9 Tax form which can be requested from the ABC Control Center.

G. Change in Director of Child Care Facility

When the director of the child care facility changes:

- Notify the ABC Control Center in writing or by telephone.

H. Change in Mailing/Payment Address

If there is a change in the facility address where services are provided (other than the provider has moved), such as a change because of 911 or change in the payment address:

- Notify the ABC Control Center in writing.
- Submit a signed W-9 Tax form which can be requested from the ABC Control Center.

I. Change in Telephone Numbers

When there is a change of the provider's telephone number, the provider must:

- Notify the ABC Control Center in writing.

J. Working Telephone

The provider must maintain a working telephone at all times, at the facility where services are being delivered. If the provider's telephone number changes, they must:

- Notify the ABC Control Center in writing or by telephone.
- Non-published numbers are not allowed.
- Failure to maintain a working telephone will result in a report being made to DSS Child Care Licensing and/or may result in termination from the ABC Program.

10. DISCONTINUING SERVICES TO ABC CLIENTS

a. Discontinuing Services by the Provider

Providers have a right to stop serving a client or child if either is disruptive to the program or does not comply with the provider's established policies. Providers must notify clients and the ABC Control Center by calling the provider line at (800-262-4416) before discontinuing services to the client.

- The reason for discontinuation must be included, i.e., failure to pay fees, parent does not pick child up on time or child displays disruptive behavior, etc.
- The ending date will be the last day of the service week (always a Sunday), in which the provider asked the client to leave.
- Clients should be notified by the provider (preferably in writing) a minimum of three working days in advance of the effective termination date.
- Clients should be allowed to finish any week in which the provider has billed for the client. Failure to allow the child to finish out a week will result in an early release, which would require the provider to forfeit any notice.

b. Termination by the ABC Program

The ABC Control Center may terminate a client's child care services. Once a decision has been reached to terminate services, the provider will receive written verification.

- If termination is initiated by the ABC Control Center, the provider and client will be notified in writing that the client's services are being terminated and all payments for services rendered after the termination date become the client's responsibility.
- The provider will be mailed a Denial/Termination Letter that reflects the effective date of termination and the reason for the termination. A minimum of 10 working days advance notice will be given from the date the determination to end services is made, unless extenuating circumstances exist, and a waiver is given to the client.

11. TERMINATION OF A PROVIDER'S ENROLLMENT

TERMINATION BY DSS

The ABC Program will terminate any ABC child care provider if the provider fails to comply with the requirements of the ABC Program and criteria for enrollment at the Level enrolled. To maintain enrollment in the ABC Program at any ABC Level, providers are required to meet regulatory requirements, and attendance and payment documentation requirements at all times. A child care facility will be terminated as an ABC provider for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

1. **Failure to Meet Regulatory Requirements** – If the provider's regulatory status is revoked, denied, or suspended, or an injunction is issued to close the facility, the provider's enrollment will be terminated. The termination of enrollment process shall be initiated immediately.

If a provider is under appeal with Child Care Licensing and deficiencies or violations are found that ***are life threatening or pose an immediate and substantial threat to the health and/or safety of the children enrolled, the*** Child Care Services Director can make the decision to remove all ABC children from the facility during the appeals process. If an injunction is issued to close the facility by Child Care Licensing, then the children will be removed immediately.

2. **Failure to Maintain History of Compliance -**

History of Compliance is defined as having:

No frequent (3 or more within 6 months) deficiencies *posing substantial threat to the health or safety of the children that involve supervision, compliance with ratios, or health and safety violations.*

- a) **Maintaining Staff-Child Ratios Requirements** – Providers shall at all times maintain staff:child ratios. When it has been determined a provider has failed to meet the required staff-child ratios 3 or more times during any 6-month period, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
 - b) **Maintaining Supervision Requirements** – Providers shall at all times maintain supervision requirements. When it has been determined that a provider has failed to meet supervision of children requirements 3 or more times during any 6-month period, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
 - c) **Maintaining Regulatory Capacity** – Providers shall at all times maintain the facility's regulatory capacity. When it has been determined a provider has exceeded the regulatory capacity at a facility 3 or more times during any 6-month period, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
 - d) **Maintaining Health and Safety Regulations** - Providers shall at all times maintain health and safety regulations. When it has been determined that the provider has received multiple violations which affect the health and safety of children, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
3. No multiple (3 or more within 6 months) deficiencies *posing substantial threat to the health or safety of the children that involve supervision, compliance with ratios, or health and safety violations.*
- a) **Maintaining A Combination of Ratios, Supervision, Regulatory Capacity, or Health and Safety** – When it has been determined a provider has failed to meet a combination of ratios, supervision, regulatory capacity requirements or health and safety (#a, b, c, and d above) during any on-site visit, or individually for 3 or more times during any six month period (i.e., 1st violation ratios, 2nd violation supervision, 3rd violation ratios), the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
4. At least one caregiver with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification and pediatric first aid certification who is on-site at all times when children are in care.
- a) **Meeting CPR/First Aid Certification** – Providers shall at all times have one caregiver with CPR and FA on-site. When it has been determined that a provider has failed to meet the CPR/First Aid Certification coverage at a facility 3 or more times during any 6-month period, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
5. Maintaining History of Compliance in which **no** significant event occurs that poses a substantial threat to *the health or safety of the children that involve supervision, compliance with ratios, or health and safety violations.*
6. **OHAN Finding(s)** –
If a staff's name at an ABC facility is entered into the Central Registry, and the perpetrator is not barred from the facility, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated immediately. For Family/Group facilities, the termination of enrollment process will initiated immediately. The Child Care Services Director can make a decision to remove all ABC children from the facility during the appeals process.
7. **Facility Moves** - If the facility moves to another location, and the new location does not meet regulatory requirements, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
8. **Failure to Provide Child Care Services at Enrolled Address** –
Providers must notify ABC in advance of days the facility will be temporarily closed or if the facility is moving or permanently closing.

When an unannounced on-site visit is conducted at an ABC facility during the hours the facility should be in operation, and services cannot be verified on the day of the visit, the ABC Program will provide written notice by certified mail to the provider to notify the

provider that if services cannot be verified during the next unannounced on-site visit, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.

If a 2nd visit is conducted and services cannot be verified (i.e. no one is there or comes to the door), the termination of enrollment process shall be initiated.

When an unannounced on-site visit is conducted and there is no evidence of child care services being offered at the enrolled address (i.e., looks abandoned, no furniture inside, wood over windows, grass overgrown, etc.) or if information is obtained from reliable sources (i.e., DSS personnel, CCR&R personnel, etc.) that the provider is operating at another address, or that children are being served at an address which the provider is not authorized, and this is verified by the ABC Program, the termination of enrollment process shall be initiated upon that visit. Funds will be recouped for the period of time when services could not be verified.

- 9. Providing Services at a Location Other Than the Enrolled Address OR other than the site the child is connected to** – Per the Provider Agreement, providers are authorized to serve children only at the site which is enrolled and has been approved by the ABC Program. When children are served at a location that has not been approved by the ABC Program, this potentially places children in harm. For example, the other location may not be a licensed facility where health and safety codes are met.

Children must be served at the location for which they have been connected. If the provider has two or more locations enrolled, they may not switch or transport children between locations without notifying the ABC Control Center for authorization. Children will appear on the SVL for the location in which they have been connected. When it is verified that children are being served at a location other than the enrolled address, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.

- 10. Failure to Respond to Attempts by ABC Staff to Reach the Provider** – If provider has ABC children currently connected, and there are 3 documented attempts within a period of 15 days (excluding weekends and holidays) by the ABC Program to reach the provider, by phone, letter, e-mail, and/or on-site visit and there is no response by the provider, the termination of enrollment process shall be initiated. Funds will be recouped for the period of time when services could not be verified.
- 11. Failure to Operate During Stated Hours of Operation** – If there are 3 documented incidents of non-compliance with the stated hours of operation during any 12-month period, the termination of enrollment process may be initiated.
- 12. Failure to Maintain LAN (Local Area Network) Phone Service** – Providers are required to have LAN phone services where ABC children are served. Cell phones are not permitted as the primary/sole phone service. When it becomes known to the ABC Program that a provider does not have LAN phone services at a facility where ABC child care services are provided, the provider should be given 30 days to secure LAN phone services. If the provider does not secure LAN phone services within the 30 days; or if it is documented that the provider did not have active LAN phone services 2 times within any 12-month period, the termination of enrollment process may be initiated.
- 13. Misuse of ABC Grant Funds** – If a provider uses ABC grant funds on purchases other than its approved use and the provider does not reimburse the ABC Program within the timeframe given for reimbursement (including any extension of time approved), the termination of enrollment process may be initiated. Recoupment of the funds will also be initiated.
- 14. Fraud** – If a provider intentionally makes a false statement or misrepresentation regarding a material fact or fails to disclose a material fact that results in obtaining, attempting to obtain, or continuing to receive ABC funds which the provider would not otherwise qualify to receive, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated. Funds will be recouped for the period of time when the provider did not qualify for the funds.

15. **Owner/Operator or Director Guilty of Fraud in A State-Funded or Federally-Funded Program** – If an owner/operator is found guilty of committing fraud in another state-funded or federally-funded program, the termination process will be initiated. If a director is found guilty of committing fraud in another state-funded or federally-funded program and the director is retained in the capacity as director of the facility, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
16. **Failure to Maintain ABC Documentation Requirements** – If a provider is cited 3 times for the same record keeping violations during any 12-month period, the termination of enrollment process may be initiated. The violations can be noted by the ABC Program Staff, the DSS Audit Staff or Child Care Licensing.
17. **Verbal or Physical Abuse of ABC Staff** – If a provider curses or yells at any ABC Program staff, the provider will be sent a certified letter after the 1st offense. The letter will describe the incident and inform the provider that another such incident will result in termination being initiated. If a 2nd offense occurs, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated. If the provider threatens, or physically assaults any ABC Program staff during the course of conducting ABC business, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
18. **Refusal to Allow ABC Representatives Access to the Facility** – If a provider refuses to allow an ABC staff on the premises or in the building of an enrolled child care facility, and the ABC staff is on official ABC business during the stated operating hours of the facility and the provider is open for business, the provider will be sent a certified letter after the 1st offense, describing the incident and notifying the provider that as a result of the incident any available bonus or grant for the review period is forfeited, and if ABC staff are denied access during any future visits, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated. If a 2nd incident occurs, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.
19. **Smoking in Facility** – If a provider has three documented incidents of violating Public Law 103-227, Part C, Environmental Tobacco Smoke Act, also known as the Pro-Children Act, which prohibits smoking in any indoor facility used routinely or regularly for the provision of health, day care, education, or library services to children under the age of 18 years, the provider will be terminated with 10-working days notice, excluding the weekends and holidays, to the provider and clients.

12. VOLUNTARY TERMINATION BY PROVIDER

Request from Provider to Terminate ABC Enrollment – Providers may voluntarily request to end their enrollment with the ABC Program as a Level C provider, by notifying the ABC Program in writing or through a documented telephone contact.

13. RE-ENROLLMENT

Waiting Period for Re-enrollment – Providers who are terminated for an adverse action or who voluntarily request termination must wait a period of six months from the date of termination before they may re-apply to come back into the ABC Program at any Level.

14. RE-ENROLLMENT EXCEPTIONS

The following are reasons a provider is ineligible to participate or re-enroll in the ABC Child Care Program at any level.

1. **Death of a Child** – Any institution or its principals who have contributed to the death or serious injury of a child or children by failing to comply with minimum health and safety regulations (defined as SC Child Care regulations) is ineligible to participate in the ABC Child Care Program at any level.

2. **Fraud** – Any institution or it's principals who have been convicted of fraud are ineligible to participate in the ABC Child Care Program at any level.
3. **Deliberate Misrepresentation** – If determined to have deliberately misrepresented information the provider is ineligible to enroll in the ABC Child Care Program at any level.
4. **Falsified Documents** – Institutions or principals who falsify or misrepresent official, legal documents (i.e., birth certificates, degrees, transcripts, etc.), or other ABC Program documents (SVL, attendance records) and submit to agency representatives are ineligible to participate in the ABC Child Care Program at any level.
5. **Administrative or Judicial Determination of Abuse and/or Neglect** – Any Institution or it's principals who abuse or neglect children and/or whose name has been entered into the Central Registry cannot be enrolled as long as the perpetrator continues to be employed and/or present at the facility.
6. **Ineligibility to Participate in Publicly Funded Programs** – Any institution or it's principals who are ineligible for any other publicly funded program due to the above criteria are prohibited from participating in the ABC Program at any level. However, this prohibition does not apply if the institution or principal has been fully reinstated in, or determined eligible for, that program, including the payment of any debts owed.

15. CONNECTING CLIENTS DURING APPEALS PROCESS

No new ABC clients should be allowed to connect to an ABC facility during an appeal with DSS ABC or Child Care Licensing. However, providers may continue serving current children connected unless the health and/or safety of the children are jeopardized.

16. REPORT TO THE ABC CONTROL CENTER

The following must be reported to the ABC Control Center:

- When a child has missed 10 consecutive days.
- If payment is not received after 14 working days from receipt of the SVL by DSS.
- If provider is going to discontinue services to a client.
- If provider will be closed for a week or longer.
- If clients fail to attend the program after authorization is given.

ADDRESS: ABC Child Care Program
ATTN: Provider Team
P.O. Box 100160
Columbia, SC 29202-3160

TELEPHONE: (800) 262-4416
FAX: (800) 310-5417

IMPORTANT!

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY OTHER INFORMATION WITH YOUR SVL SUCH AS CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, FEIN NUMBER CHANGES, ETC. THIS INFORMATION MUST BE REPORTED TO THE ABC CONTROL CENTER.

17. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Definitions of key terms are presented to ensure clarity and understanding. These definitions express the administering agency's intent and meaning for the terms identified.

ABC Child Care Control Center (ABC Control Center)

The authorized child care voucher system management center that is available to provide assistance to clients and providers, and to handle child care applications, funding and connecting.

- Providers call: **1-800-262-4416** for notification requirements and/or questions concerning ABC Child Care Program procedures.
- Parents call: **1-800-476-0199** for any questions.

ABC Child Care Program (ABC Program)

The South Carolina statewide child care assistance program funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and state dollars.

Absenteeism

When the child is not present (absent all day) at the provider's facility during the service unit (week) either due to illness, vacation or court ordered non-custodial visitation.

Activity Fees

Activity fees are considered other fees charged by the provider to parents such as transportation fees or special activity fees, etc. These fees are the **responsibility** of the parent.

Authorized Service Period

The specific time frame that child care services are authorized to a client and a specific provider.

Billing Rate

The provider's weekly service rate minus any applicable client fee, and any discount for a second child.

Care Type

The age groups 0-2, 3-5 and 6-12 in which the provider has enrolled with the ABC Program. Providers cannot offer or receive payment for service in a care type in which they have not been enrolled.

Center-Based Care

Facility licensed by DSS to serve 13 or more children.

Child

The recipient of child care services.

Child Name

The first and last name of the child.

Child Number

This is the client's last 4 digits of their Social Security number plus the two-digit code 01, 02, etc. assigned to the child. It identifies the child for the purpose of payment and system activities. **Providers should never change the assigned child number.**

Client

An individual who has met the eligibility criteria and is funded for child care.

Client Fee

The portion of the provider's weekly service rate (cost) which is based on the client's family size and income, and paid by the client directly to the provider.

Client Number

The client's last 4 digits of their Social Security number. This number identifies all client activity in the system.

Client Termination

Action taken when the client is no longer eligible for services. Once notified that the client is terminated, the provider is not eligible for payment for services.

Connected

A start and stop date (linked to a specific provider) within the ABC Child Care Voucher System.

Denial

When an applicant is denied child care assistance due to inability to meet eligibility criteria or failure to comply with application requirements.

Eligibility Period

The amount of time authorized for the individual child to receive child care services.

End Date

The last date of service authorization.

Facility Cost

The cost a provider charges all parents for a week of child care.

NOTE: Parents are responsible for the difference between the facility cost and the amount paid by the ABC Program, plus any applicable client fee.

Family Child Care Home

Home registered or licensed by DSS to serve no more than six children.

Family Independence Act of 1995

An Act passed by the South Carolina General Assembly to require the DSS to emphasize employment and training with only a minor welfare component. The Act specifies action required by DSS to implement "Welfare Reform." It also specifies requirements for applicants and recipients in order to receive financial assistance.

Family Independence (FI)

Child care assistance provided to current FI stipend clients to encourage participation in approved employment, education or training activities. These requirements are met through the Family Independent Program in South Carolina in an effort to emphasize parental responsibility and self-determination.

Family Independence Stipend

A monthly payment made to a family who meets the required eligibility standards; previously referred to as welfare or AFDC.

Fee Scale

The fee amount is established by SCDSS on the basis of family size and gross family income. That portion of the child care cost, which is paid by the client directly to the child care provider.

Foster Care

Children who are in the custody of DSS, and placed out of their home by and/or under the supervision of DSS.

Full-Time Care

Thirty or more hours of child care service provided during one week.

Funded

Any child for whom dollars have been allocated in their name.

Group Child Care

Home or building licensed by DSS to serve no more than 12 children.

Half-Time Care

Less than 30 hours, but no more than 15 hours of child care service provided during one week.

Less than Half-Time Care

Less than 15 hours of child care service provided during a week. No registration fee is allowed for this care type. This care type only applies to Welfare Reform participants receiving subsidized child care.

Level A

Exemplary programs measured against rigorous quality standards.

Level B

Programs measured against quality standards beyond basic state regulations.

Level C

Programs meeting basic licensing regulations (health and safety).

Maximum Rate

Maximum weekly rates established by DSS on the basis of a market rate survey of urban and rural counties, type of facility and care types.

Payable Adjustment

The process of paying the provider for monies due them.

Provider Identification Number

The Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or Social Security number of the provider. This number identifies the provider for purposes of payment, tracking and reporting.

Receivable Adjustment

The process of collecting monies that were paid to the provider that were not due them.

Registration Fee

Registration fees are set amounts established by the provider to cover costs not included in the weekly rate. The ABC Program will pay registration fee to providers up to an established program maximum.

Remittance Advice

A document included with the provider's check. There are three different types:

- 1)**Paid Remittance Advice:** indicates what clients and weeks were paid;
- 2)**Rejected Remittance Advice:** indicates which clients and weeks were not paid and the reason;
- 3)**Adjusted Remittance Advice:** indicates if funds were deducted from the provider's check, the amount and the reason.

Service Cost

The provider rate as reflected in the ABC Child Care Voucher System.

Service Unit

One week of child care (Monday - Sunday). A service unit may be for half-time, full-time or less than half-time child care.

Service Voucher Log (SVL)

A pre-printed payment request form used to process payments to providers for eligible clients.

South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS)

The administering state agency for the ABC Program, and the agency responsible for administering the Welfare Reform, Family Independence Program.

Start Date

The date services are authorized to begin by DSS or the ABC Program/Control Center staff.

Stop Date

The last date of service authorization.

Week

Monday through Sunday.

18. DETAILED EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE CODES

The following codes are to be used when documenting absences. When a child is absent, you must enter a "0" for hours attended and indicate the appropriate absence code for each child for each day. If there are not any absences to report for a child, you must enter the total number of hours a child attended for that day. The following are the only approved absence codes. Failure to use these codes will result in your SVL being returned for corrections which will delay payments.

CNS – Child never started the facility

This code should be used when a child(ren) never started the facility. This code will result in the child being disconnected from your facility unless you are requiring a notice. When using this code, you are required to indicate a drop/transfer date and a pay until date. (See SVL Instructions)

COV – Child had court-ordered visitation

This code should be used when a child does not attend your program for a specified period of time due to visitation with a non-custodial parent (court ordered or parental agreement).

DEC – Child is deceased

This code should be used in cases where the child is deceased. When using this code, you must enter a drop/transfer date. (See SVL Instructions)

Note: Entering deceased for a child will end connections the Sunday following the date the code is notated. Notice will not be given to child care providers for this reason code.

FCL – Facility closed

This code should be used when the actual facility is closed. Example: Inclement weather, holidays, or other reasons when the facility is not open for business.

FNL – Child on funeral leave

This code should be used when the child does not attend the facility due to a funeral.

HOS – Child out with serious injury/illness/hospitalization

This code should be used when the child, parent, or sibling is hospitalized which would prevent the child receiving the services to be able to attend the facility.

MOV – Child moved out of county/state

This code should be used when a child moves out of the county or state. When using this code, you must enter a drop/transfer date and a pay until date. (See SVL Instructions)

NLA – Child no longer attends

This code should be used when a child no longer attends your program. When using this code, you must indicate a drop/transfer and pay until date. (See SVL Instructions)

NSD – Not a service day for the child

This code should be used when the child is not scheduled to be at the facility. Example: Parent keeps the child home on the days they are off work and its part of the normal schedule. Example: Parent works Monday, Wednesday and Friday and is off on Tuesday and Thursday and keeps the child home on Tuesday and Thursday. This code should be used for the Tuesday and Thursday absence.

Note: If your facility is not open on the weekends, you must enter zeros for hours attended for Saturday and Sunday and must use the absence code NSD.

SIK – Child out sick

This code should be used when the child is out sick, the parent is sick, doctor/dentist visits, maternity leave, or other reasons associated with illness.

VAC – Child on vacation

This code should be used when a child is on vacation, personal days or for any unknown absence reason.