

TOPIC: Child Care (CAPS) application process for MS, LA, AL evacuees

Some evacuees due to Hurricane Katrina may need child care assistance. Those families should be served as a priority due to the natural disaster. All normal CAPS policies apply for these specific evacuees with the exceptions listed below. These exceptions only apply to evacuees who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Verification (If not available, client statement will suffice):

- Some form of evacuee status, such as school enrollment for children
- Proof of former out of state address
- Verification of income or employment offer

For Non-TANF families:

- CAPS income limits may be waived by the child care case manager on a case-by-case basis for families if needed. Record must be documented. Decisions regarding waivers should be consistently applied throughout the county.
- CAPS approved activities may include up to 6 weeks of job search. Document that this is due to the natural disaster.
- CAPS hourly participation requirement may be initially waived for up to 60 days. Document that this is due to the natural disaster.
- Fees are to be assessed, but may be waived due to hardship if needed and documented.
- An extension of time may be allowed for families to meet immunization requirements. Documentation is required.
- Use UAS Code 545 (eligible exceptions), not UAS 544 for these cases.

Important note:

At the six-month case review, all regular CAPS policies for non-TANF families must be met (such as income within the CAPS income scale, and no job search activities).

Counties must maintain a record of the name and number of CAPS family applications, the number of applications approved, the number of children added, and number of denials specifically due to Katrina evacuee status. Counties will retain the case list at the county level. The **number** of applications, approvals, and denials due to Katrina evacuee status is to be submitted to the child care program specialist weekly at a time designated by the regional specialist. The regional office will compile numbers by county and region, and submit to the OFI Child Care Unit by Wednesday of the next week, until further notice. A spreadsheet for this information and routing instructions will be forwarded to regional child care program specialists.

Regions are currently monitoring expenditures. Funds will be made available in UAS 545. If the county's current allocation is not sufficient for the need, suspended MIERS will be cleared by the DFCS Budget Office. If, due to the increased numbers, current child care allocations will not cover projected costs to add these families, regions must notify, by e-mail, the State DFCS Budget Office, with a copy to Gail Ormsby.

MAXSTAR will only be available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., including September 5, Labor Day.

This is applicable immediately upon receipt. Any questions should be directed to the Regional Child Care Program Specialist for your area.