



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of January 27, 2007**

DATE: December 19, 2006

SUBJECT: Revised Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Subsidy

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve revision to the current sliding fee scale that includes a 250 percent poverty level income line for the Arlington County Child Care Co-Pay Scale (Attachment A) applicable only to eligible clients.

ISSUES: None.

SUMMARY: The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) has proposed Child Care Policy changes that revise the fee scale, effective October 1, 2006. The proposed sliding fee scale revision allows adults who are caretakers but not legal guardians or parents to now take advantage of this subsidy for child care. Attachment A is the proposed revised sliding fee scale that adds the 250 percent poverty level income scale and this change only applies to an adult caretaker. Currently, only four (4) families are identified as caretakers where relatives have assumed care of a child for whom a fee will be assessed. The assessment of the income utilizing this new income scale will not occur until late January 2007.

BACKGROUND: The County has maintained a sliding fee scale (Attachment B) to which there have been no changes until the recent revision in policy. The old fee scale was used to determine financial eligibility for any person applying for day care services at 185 percent of the federal poverty level, and did not include caretakers who were not parents or legal custodians. This scale enabled the County to determine the client's co-pay by measuring the family unit's countable gross monthly income and family size.

DISCUSSION: Prior to October 1, 2006, income consideration was not required for caretakers. The recent changes to the VDSS Child Care Policy - Chapter D, state that in order to qualify for subsidy, income for caretakers must be assessed using a fee scale of 250 percent over the federal poverty guidelines. As a result of this increase in the eligible caretakers under this revision, the Child Care Office anticipates that fewer than 10 families annually will be assessed.

The State requested that the County submit a sliding scale with dates that follow their fiscal year and the change for caretakers. The State submits this scale as a part of the VA State plan to the federal government annually. The only change to the revised scale is the inclusion of caretakers at the 250 percent poverty level.

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Toya Bryant, Child and Family Services, DHS

FISCAL IMPACT: Fee assessments will have a minimal impact on net tax support.