DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

December 31, 1997

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 97-83

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY AUDITOR-CONTROLLERS
ALL CWD FISCAL OFFICERS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

[ ] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulations Change
[ ] Court Order or Settlement Agreement
[ ] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[X] Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: CHILD CARE CAPACITY BUILDING

I. INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is allocating state funds to County Welfare Departments to recruit licensed child care providers and to encourage quality improvement in license exempt child care arrangements. With the implementation of CalWORKs, it will be necessary to greatly expand child care capacity throughout the state. These funds are intended to assist in the expansion of available child care capacity, and to take additional steps to enhance the provision of care in license exempt child care arrangements. A total of $5.75 million will be allocated to the counties for these purposes. Specific county allocations are being released in CFL 97/98-43 and are based on each county's pro rata share of CalWORKs children and Transitional Child Care. The formula was developed in consultation with the County Welfare Director's Association. Counties will be requested to complete the attached County Child Care Capacity Building Questionnaire, and to report on specific outcomes on an ongoing basis, as described in this letter. County Welfare Departments may use the funds to contract out activities to other child care organizations and/or to directly perform capacity building activities. It is our intention, subject to legislative approval, to allow use of these funds to be continued into the next budget year. To best meet local child care needs, counties will be allowed maximum flexibility in utilizing funding within the parameters discussed in this letter. Approximately $2 million in state funds will also be utilized to fund a statewide educational institution to provide a quality improvement program for licensed child care providers. An additional $250,000 will be used to develop a statewide tool for assessing each county's anticipated child care need through an interagency agreement with the U.C. Berkeley Chancellor's office.

II. OBJECTIVES FOR USE OF CAPACITY BUILDING FUNDS

Allocations to County Welfare Departments are being released to meet the following objectives:

- Increase the available supply of child care as needed to meet the growing demand for child care as welfare recipients transition from welfare to work.

- Enhance the provision of care provided in license exempt child care arrangements.

III. PROGRAM GUIDELINES

County utilization of these funds is expected to comply with the following guidelines:

- To reduce duplication and promote collaboration, county activities must be coordinated with other organizations within the county that are engaged in similar activities or that provide other child care services, including CDSS licensing offices and regional child care advocates, resource and referral agencies, local planning councils, provider associations, California Department of Education-funded quality improvement activities, community colleges and local adult education schools. When possible, local efforts should build upon existing efforts and models such as the Child Care Initiative operated by local resource and referral agencies, in areas where that program is in place.The county's allocation must be expended on activities designed to meet the two objectives identified above. The total allocation can be spent on activities to meet either objective, except that a minimum of 25% of the total allocation must be expended on each objective.

- Counties must provide the CDSS with quarterly data to assess the effectiveness of the activities to meet the stated objectives. Data reporting will include the number of new child care providers recruited, the number of child care slots developed, and the number of providers who attended training. Counties are also expected to include a mechanism for measuring effectiveness of training provided.

- Recruitment activities must target geographic areas where high concentrations of CalWORKs recipients reside, work or require transportation (bus/rail) to work or work related activities.

- Quality improvement activities should focus on teaching basic child care health and safety. First aid and CPR training must be provided to each participant in addition to information on other issues related to child safety, including shaken baby and sudden infant death syndrome.

- License exempt providers who are interested in becoming licensed should be given information about how to obtain a license.

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

- Recruitment activities can include such things as public information campaigns to reach prospective care providers and efforts to assist care providers to begin operation. If the new provider requires or is interested in licensure, county efforts could include assistance with the licensing process and with meeting licensing requirements. Activities may include use of funds for facility start-up costs, or for modification of facility physical plants to meet licensing requirements.

- Funds may also be used to provide reimbursement for one-time costs such as training costs or licensing fees, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, electrical outlet covers, toys, car seats, etc., for participants to become licensed.

- As these funds are available for this one-time use only, counties are also encouraged to identify other funding sources to allow the continuation of activities after funding ends.

- When appropriate to enhance the delivery of recruitment services, county consortiums that cover multiple county jurisdictions and establish regional partnerships are encouraged.

- Participants should be encouraged to provide child care as appropriate to meet expected CalWORKs child care needs, such as care for infants or ill children, and child care provided on weekends or after normal business hours.

- Supportive efforts to improve communication with providers (i.e., mentoring, connections to local child care associations, telephone hot lines, information and referral services and provider support groups) are strongly encouraged to help participants receive the support they need to become and remain successful care providers.

- Recruitment activities which include provisions for ongoing contact (i.e., workshops, newsletters, classes, etc.) with care providers after recruitment are also encouraged.

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR LICENSE-EXEMPT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

- The scheduling of quality improvement training in local communities should take into consideration reasonable travel distances for participants, and availability on weekend and evening hours.

- Quality improvement training may be provided through classroom attendance, the viewing of video materials or other distance learning methods.

- Quality improvement training may include provision for opportunities for follow-up training and technical assistance (i.e., workshops, newsletters, classes, etc.) with the participants after the initial training has been completed.

- When appropriate to enhance the delivery of the training to be provided, county consortiums that include multiple county proposals, or regional collaborations, are encouraged.

The CDSS is requesting County Welfare Departments to return the attached Questionnaire to the Department at: 744 P Street, M.S. 17-17, Sacramento, California, 95814 outlining their intended uses for these funds no later than February 1, 1998. For further information regarding the county allocations or activities, please contact Dave Dodds, Chief, Community Care Licensing Division - Advocacy Branch, at (916) 653-3702.

Sincerely,

MARTHA LOPEZ
Deputy Director
Community Care Licensing Division

CHILD CARE CAPACITY BUILDING
COUNTY PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Describe recruitment and quality improvement activities that the county will provide including how the services will be delivered (i.e., whether the county will conduct activities directly or contract with other organizations). Identify any additional objectives the county hopes to accomplish through the funded activities.

2. Describe the anticipated collaborations with other local child care agencies and organizations that will be utilized to accomplish the funded activities.

3. Describe the anticipated county budget for capacity building and percentage of total expenditures to be spent per activity. Include any anticipated in-kind or other contributions that the county will obtain or make available.

4. Describe the geographic regions or populations within the county that will be targeted by the funded activities.

5. Identify the expected outcomes that the county expects to achieve utilizing the capacity building allocation.

   Number of projected care providers that will be trained:
   Number of projected child care providers that will be recruited:
   Number of additional child care slots that will be developed:
   Description of county method for evaluating training activities:

6. Name, address, telephone and fax number of the county contact person who will be responsible for managing the capacity building activities and for providing information to CDSS: