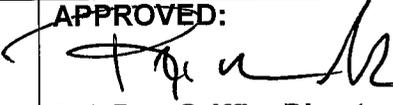


	<p align="center">COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO</p> <p align="center">PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT</p> <p align="center">POLICY</p>	<p>NO. 01 FCP ISSUE 2</p>
		<p align="right">PAGE 1 of 7</p> <p>EFFECTIVE: 08-29-2012</p>
<p>SUBJECT:</p> <p>CHILDREN'S FUND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM</p>		<p>APPROVED:</p>  <p>BY: Ron Griffin, Director</p>

PURPOSE

To inform PSD staff of guidelines to request vouchers to assist PSD enrolled families.

POLICY

The Preschool Services Department (PSD) addresses a broad range of health needs for children and families they serve throughout the county in partnership with Children's Fund. PSD employees will identify at risk children and/or families with the greatest unmet need and lack of resources to complete referrals for supplemental resources. Children's Fund has donated a lump sum to the County to meet these needs. PSD will issue vouchers to fulfill requests as defined below.

REFERENCE

Head Start Performance Standards 1304.40 (b)(1)(i).
 County of San Bernardino Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector, Internal Controls and Cash Manual.

PROCEDURE

PSD Voucher Requests

PSD may only issue vouchers to fulfill requests for emergency needs for the following items:

- Beds
- Bedding (sheets, covers, blankets)
- Car seats
- Clothing
- Cribs
- Diapers/Wipes
- Food
- Formula
- Hygiene
- School Supplies

Important Note:

- 1) **No exceptions** may be made regarding the above mentioned items to be purchased via a voucher.
- 2) Additional items may be available through Children's Fund (contact PSD Administrative office).

Voucher Limits:

All voucher requests are subject to approval and are limited to the following amounts:

Category	Maximum Allowed	Basis
Beds*	Twin Bed \$375 Bunk Beds \$450	Per Child Home visit required. Must be new.
Mattress only for existing bed frame	\$200	
Bedding	\$50	Per Child
Car seats	\$75	Per Child
Clothing	\$200	Per Child
Cribs*	\$250	Per Child Home visit required. Must be new.
Diapers/Wipes	\$25	Per Child
Food (families currently receiving CalFresh benefits are excluded)	\$150 \$200	Per family (up to 4 members) Per family (5 or more members)
Formula	\$50	Per Child
Hygiene	\$25	Per child
School Supplies	\$25	Per child

*Delivery & Set-up Fees paid by Children’s Fund above the maximum amount allowed as a separate itemization on the voucher.

Request Frequency

Requests for Children’s Fund assistance are limited to the following:

- **One time only per item** or need (for the lifetime of the child/parent)
- Once every fiscal year (July 1 – June 30)

Request Eligibility

This program is intended to serve children from birth to age 18 provided that:

- Family is case managed with home visitations.
- Family has a verifiable immediate need.
- All children listed on the request live in the household
- Family has at least one child currently enrolled in either Head Start or State Preschool Programs.
- Generalist/Home Visitor verifies in the COPA database that the children and/or family
 - 1) Have NOT received a Children’s Fund voucher in the current fiscal year, and
 - 2) Have NOT received assistance for the same items in their lifetime.
- Family meets Children’s Fund eligibility requirements:
 - Income meets U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Federal Poverty Income Guidelines
 - Disposable income does not exceed \$200 per family of 1-4; or \$300 per family of 5 or more
 - Demonstrates sustainability after receiving requested items

- o Total out-going bills do not exceed monthly income by more than \$150 on an ongoing basis

Voucher Packet

PSD staff will complete the following documents in their entirety for review and approval by the Site Supervisor or the Program Supervisor.

- Authorization of Issuance of Immediate Need PSD 712
- Authorization to Release of Information for Immediate Need Voucher.

Upon approval the documents will be forwarded to the local PSD Fund Custodian for processing.

The PSD Staff will document the issuance of the immediate need voucher in the client’s case notes with all pertinent information. Documentation must include the urgent need, home visit, items given, and issuance of a Children’s Fund voucher.

Important: PSD Staff is responsible for verifying that the vendor accepts a County voucher through the vendor listing on the enrollment page in COPA **prior** to issuance to the client.

Approved Voucher Processing

The following table describes the steps the local PSD Fund Custodian and/or Generalist completes in obtaining an immediate need voucher that includes completion of the voucher HS 278 (voucher), Authorization to Release of Information for Immediate Need Voucher, Authorization of Issuance of Immediate Need (PSD 712) form, and Voucher/Grocery/Service Order Log HS 715 (voucher log):

Step	Who	Action
1	Generalist/ Home Visitor	<p>Determines need of the child/children and/or family for Children’s Fund voucher item(s) and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines eligibility of the at-risk child/children and/or family. • Reviews family file to verify family has not received assistance in the current fiscal year from Children’s Fund, or has not received assistance for the same items in previous years. • Conducts home visit. • Documents urgent need, home visit and items requested in COPA. • Documents conversation in COPA that this is a one-time assistance for an urgent immediate need and they will not be eligible to receive assistance through a Children’s Fund voucher for these same items in the future. Case Notes must reflect that this is a request for an urgent immediate need for a <u>“Children’s Fund Voucher”</u>. • Obtains client’s signature on <u>Authorization to Release Information for Immediate Need Voucher</u> and place in family file.

Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program, *Continued*

Step	Who	Action
2	Generalist/ Home Visitor	If there is not a current vendor already identified on the accepted vendor listing for a specific item, contact vendor and verify acceptance of a County voucher (a vendor listing will be maintained on COPA under the Enrollment tab).
3	Generalist/ Home Visitor	Completes the <u>PSD 712</u> form per instructions; consult and obtain Program Supervisor's or Site Supervisor's signature. PSD 712 must be fully completed, including the cost per item (per voucher limits table on Page 2) and maximum amount issued. <u>Special Instructions: The PSD Director must review all vouchers submitted for PSD employee requests for assistance.</u>
4	Generalist/ Home Visitor	Instruct client regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval process of the voucher request. • Time frames of how and when the voucher will be issued.
5	Generalist/ Home Visitor	Faxes PSD 712 form to their assigned Program Manager.
6	Program Manager/ Supervisor	Program Manager/Supervisor reviews PSD 712 and <u>COPA notes</u> to ensure that an emergency need has been adequately documented in COPA, as well as the discussion with parent regarding the urgent immediate need and one-time assistance through Children's Fund.
7	Program Manager/ Supervisor	Program Manager/Supervisor provides signed PSD 712 to Quality Assurance Team in Administration for final review.
8	Quality Assurance	Reviews COPA notes to ensure that an emergency need has been adequately documented. Approves the voucher issuance and the PSD 712 form. Provides the approved PSD 712 to Fund Custodian for issuance.
9	Quality Assurance or Fund Custodian	Checks the Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program spreadsheet to verify children and/or family has not received a Children's Fund voucher in the current fiscal year; or the same item in lifetime.
10	Fund Custodian	Calls Generalist to advise that PSD 712 has been approved and a voucher will be issued once they come in to pick it up. Note: Generalist <u>must</u> arrange a time with the Fund Custodian to pick up the voucher. Vouchers cannot be completed until Generalist is at the PSD Administration office.

Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program, *Continued*

Step	Who	Action
11	Generalist/ Home Visitor	At PSD Administrative Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide original PSD 712 to Fund Custodian.
12	Fund Custodian	Once Generalist is at PSD Administration office to pick up the voucher, the Fund Custodian: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signs original PSD 712 approving issuance; 2. Obtains voucher from locked file cabinet; 3. Completes voucher per the PSD 712 form; 4. Signs/dates PSD 712 and voucher authorizing issuance; 5. Enters voucher void date (five working days from date of issuance); 6. Makes a copy of original voucher for fund custodian file; 7. Records issuance on voucher log; and 8. Has the Generalist sign voucher log.
13	Generalist/ Home Visitor	At PSD Administrative Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifies information on voucher • Signs voucher log acknowledging receipt of and responsibility for the voucher. • Receives the voucher and original PSD 712 from the Fund Custodian.
14	Generalist/ Home Visitor	Contacts client to advise approval of the request for an immediate need Children's Fund voucher and set up appointment to pick up the voucher.
15	Generalist/ Home Visitor	At Generalist's worksite: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtains parent's signature/date where indicated on voucher acknowledging parent's receipt of the voucher. 2. Documents in COPA that family needs have been addressed and met; and close referral. 3. Makes <u>two</u> copies of the signed voucher (<u>white page</u>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) copy to be retained in the family file (attached to a copy of the approved PSD 712) • One (1) copy for the fund custodian at PSD Administration. 4. Gives top two (2) pages (white and canary) of the voucher to parent to purchase approved item(s) from vendor. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Remind parent that voucher must be used prior to expiration date, as it will not be reissued. 5. Makes sure the third page (<u>pink page</u>) of the voucher is retained.

Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program, *Continued*

Step	Who	Action
16	Generalist/ Home Visitor	Send the <u>pink</u> page of the signed voucher and the <u>original</u> PSD 712 to HS Auditing IMMEDIATELY addressed as follows: HS Auditing – MAIL CODE 0914 Attention Voucher Desk 825 East Hospitality Lane, First Floor San Bernardino, CA 92415-0132 <u>IMPORTANT:</u> These documents need to be sent to HS Auditing <u>immediately</u> to ensure prompt payment to the vendors.
17	Fund Custodian	Upon receipt of the copy of the signed voucher, updates the electronic log and retains copy of voucher in file.
18	Fund Custodian	Maintains the blank vouchers and the voucher log per the ATC Internal Controls and Cash Manual (Chapter 20). On a <u>monthly</u> basis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciles voucher log. • Documents all shortages. • Refer all shortages immediately to HS Auditing. • Submit to Quality Assurance Supervisor reviews and approves reconciliation of the voucher log. • Retains a copy of reconciled voucher log for department. Submits <u>original</u> reconciled voucher log and all voided vouchers (ALL THREE PAGES OF THE VOUCHER MUST BE SENT) to HS Auditing by the third (3 rd) business day of the following month (Mail Code 0914, Attention Jacqueline Vega).

Voiding Vouchers

Quality Assurance Supervisor's approval must be obtained PRIOR to voiding a voucher HS 278 (voucher) and recorded as a void on the Voucher/Grocery/Service Order Log HS 715 (voucher log). Once approval obtained:

Step	Who	Action
1	Fund Custodian	Writes "VOID" on ALL THREE pages of the voucher.
2	Quality Assurance	Initials on the voided voucher.
3	Fund Custodian	Records the voided voucher on the voucher log: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF NOT LOGGED – enter the date; write "VOID" in the 'Case Name/Case Number' lines; enter "1" issued and the voided voucher serial number; deduct from balance, • IF LOGGED – line through the entry; write "VOID" adjacent to 'Case Name/Case Number' lines.

Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program, *Continued*

Step	Who	Action
4	Fund Custodian and Quality Assurance	Required Signatures – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund Custodian signs in the 'Requested By' line; • Quality Assurance Supervisor signs in 'Issued/Rec'd By' line
5	Fund Custodian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains voided voucher with other stock until the end of month reconciliation. • Attaches the voided voucher (ALL THREE pages) to the applicable reconciled voucher log sent to HS Auditing on a monthly basis.

Lost Or Stolen Vouchers

IMMEDIATELY inform Quality Assurance Supervisor and call HS Auditing Payments Unit at (909) 383-9746 if any vouchers have been lost or stolen. HS Auditing will provide further instruction.

Parent Does Not Use the Issued Voucher

When the Generalist/CP Home Visitor finds out the parent did not use an issued voucher for approved items, s/he will:

- Obtain the voucher from the parent (white and canary pages).
- Immediately return ALL pages (white and canary) of the issued voucher to the Fund Custodian at the Administration office.

Voucher Tracking and Record Keeping

All immediate need voucher requests will be tracked on the Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program spreadsheet maintained by the Fund Custodian and monitored by the Quality Assurance Supervisor and stored on the PSD shared drive to ensure all transactions are accounted for and to avoid duplication of requests.

IMPORTANT: The Quality Assurance Supervisor will continually monitor the Children's Fund Voucher Assistance Program spreadsheet to ensure PSD voucher issuances **DO NOT** exceed the monthly ceiling amount of **\$7,500**. Monthly issuance totals must be reported to Human Services Administration, attention Kelly Tobin.

Staff shall follow the instructions and procedures in the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector (ATC) Internal Controls and Cash Manual (refer to Chapter 20).