User Guide

Waiting List Priority Tool

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Introduction to the User Guide

Supported Child Development (SCD) Programs may have waiting lists for services. When this happens, the SCD Program uses a "weighted waiting list" model. In this kind of a model, requests on the waiting list are prioritized based on specific criteria. The criteria used by SCD Programs are based on:

- SCD policy and contractual requirements of the Ministry of Children and Family Development;

Community specific priorities and needs;

- Agency specific priorities and need.

Agencies providing the SCD Program in the Coast Fraser region of B.C. have collaborated to create a common set of criteria. Common criteria across programs allows families to have similar experiences with SCD when their request for service is waitlisted. It also assists with transition of families between communities, and cross boundary requests for funding (e.g. child / family live in one community but attend child care in another community), when this occurs.

Use of this tool does not influence how each agency/program structures their SCD extra staffing support funding. Some programs structure these funds as one pot of money, while others structure it by age range. The tools have been set up to allow for this variety of structures.

This user guide tells you what is involved in determining the priority level for a child, family and child care setting waiting for service. This User Guide is to be used in conjunction with training on determining priorities. Your Coordinator will let you know about this training and how to move forward with learning how to determine priorities. Your program will have a copy of this user guide should you need to look at it after the training.

Using the Tool - Start with Guiding Principles

The delivery of SCD services is guided by a set of core principles. Similar principles will guide you as you gather information and use it to determine priorities. These principles will include:

a) Transparency:

The tools used to determine the priority of any waitlisted service request must be transparent – that is, the family and child care program must be able to clearly understand the criteria used to determine the priority status of their request and of waitlisted requests over all.

b) Accountable:

SCD Programs are accountable to families, child care programs, team members and MCFD in their decision making about priorities for service. The priority level given in any situation must be able to be substantiated with concrete information that is, to the greatest extent possible, objective.

c) Clear / Consistent Communication:

SCD Programs are able to communicate clearly and consistently about the criteria used to make decisions about the priority of service requests, individually with families / child care programs, for their program as a whole and across the region.

d) Family Centered Practice:

Families need for service is influenced by a variety of factors. While waiting list management requires the ability to prioritize situations based on level of need, it must occur within the family centered principles and practices that guide the program. This means that each family's unique circumstances and support needs should be identified and used to establish their need for service. Information gathered and how it occurs respects the family's right to share information in the most comfortable way possible, while also ensuring that information collected allows for objective, apples to apples comparisons of priority status.

e) Accessible:

Recognizing that the process of waiting for service can be confusing and stressful, SCD Programs will strive to make the waiting list process as straightforward as possible.

f) Coordinated / Streamlined:

Recognizing that each SCD Program has their own systems and forms for requesting, approving and funding extra staffing support, forms and materials for establishing priorities for service will be coordinated to minimize confusion for families, child care programs and SCD Programs.

Glossary of Terms

The following terms are included in the Waiting List Priority Tool:

A. **Coast Fraser Region** – the Coast Fraser Region includes communities in Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast, Sea to Sky corridor and Powell River. The regions are established by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

B. **2044 Form** – the 2044 is a form completed by a MCFD child protection social worker to confirm that there is a need for child care as part of an overall plan for the child and family.

C. **Support Guide** – the tool used by SCD Consultants to gather information from the family and child care program. When completed, the Support Guide provides a profile of the child's development and of the strengths, needs and priorities of the child care program. Your SCD Program may use either the most recent version of the Support Guide or the previous version of the Support Guide (2004).

D. **Priority Rating Scale** – the tool many programs used to determine priorities for extra staffing support between 2005 and now. The Waiting List Priority Tool replaces the Priority Rating Scale in the Coast Fraser region.

E. **Family Support Profile & Child Setting Profile** – add on forms to the Support Guide to gather information needed to determine priorities for service.

F. **Waitlist Priority Information Form & Priorities Summary** – the 2 sided form you complete to identify priorities and summarize your rationale for the priority levels.

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Completing the Waiting List Priority Tool

Determining the Priorities

There are 3 steps required to determine the priority level for a waiting list situation. These steps include:

1. Gathering Information
2. Determining the Priority Level

3. Documenting the Priority Level

Each of these steps are discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

Gathering Information:

To determine the priority level, the SCD Consultant/ Coordinator needs information about the child, family and child care program. This is gathered from the family, child care program and other team members involved with the family.

The different sections of the Support Guide your agency/program uses will give you a lot of the information you need. Specifically, this includes the Child Development Profile** and the Support Profile, using either the current or previous versions of the Support Guide or comparable forms used by your agency/ program..

> **Note that if you are using the current version of the Support Guide, the Child Development Profile does not include check boxes for identifying if 'adult/direct assistance' is required as identified in the criteria. To gather this information, please make a note in each section of the child development profile in place of the check boxes.

You will also need some additional information about the family and child care program. There are some specific questions that you need to answer about the family and child care setting needs. You can find these questions in Appendix #1. Your program coordinator will identify how you gather this information – it may involved an 'add-on' page to the Support Guide or other forms your agency uses to gather family and child care information. As this information provides important information for supporting the capacity of child care programs, it is suggested that you gather it for all children, families and child care programs (e.g. even if extra staffing support is not needed).

Determining the Priority Level:

As mentioned earlier, the areas considered to identify priorities are based on provincial SCD policy. These include:

1. Date of Referral and Length of Time on the Waiting List

2. Level of Need including the subsections:

    a. Child's Age

    b. Child's Needs

    c. Family needs

    d. Child Care Setting Needs

For each area in "Level of Need", there are specific criteria. You can find these criteria in the user guide. They are also available as 'cheat sheets' to use when completing the tool.

As you review the concrete / detailed information you have gathered about the child, family and child care setting, you will use it to determine which criteria best reflect their situation. You will participate in training with other SCD Consultants on how to do this.

Documenting the Priority Level:

Based on the information you have gathered, and the criteria in Section # (or as on the cheat sheet), you will:

1. Fill in the priority level within each area of need on the Waiting List Priority Information form

2. Complete the Priorities Summary form summarizing the reasons / rationale for the priority level

you assigned. This will provide the coordinator with concrete information needed for managing the waiting list and addressing questions that may arise about individual situations.

There are 3 different versions of forms, depending on how your agency/ program structures its extra staffing support / support funding.   Your coordinator will let you know which form you are to use.

Your program coordinator will have more information on the forms & resources for using the tool.

Hints, Tips & Reminders

✳ The Waiting List Priority Tool is completed after the child has been deemed eligible for SCD.

✳ The tool is only used to determine the priority levels needed in waiting list management.

✳ The Family Profile can be added to an extra staffing request form if your program uses one.

✳ Remember to use the questions & prompts from the User Guide to complete the Family & Child Care Support Profiles.