The CCDF Policies Database: How to Use the Excel Data Files

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Introduction

The full detail of the CCDF Policies Database through the most current year of verified information is available for public use on the Child and Family Data Archive website (https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org). The files are available in several formats, including Excel. As currently structured, the entire database detail is available in one Excel file which can be accessed through two options on the website: downloading all files or downloading select files. Note that regardless of whether the user clicks on "All Files" or "Select Files," Excel files for the entire database will be provided. The Excel files and other formats of the data files are intended to be used with the CCDF Policies Database Codebook (also available on the Child and Family Data Archive website).

When to use the Excel Data Files vs. the Book of Tables

In addition to the data files available on the Child and Family Data Archive website, a yearly Book of Tables is produced to highlight key policies across the states. Each Book of Tables focuses on policies as of a single point in time (October 1 of each year) and is available on the project website (https://ccdf.urban.org).

The Book of Tables provides faster access to information in the CCDF Policies Database when the following are all true:

- The research question involves key policies covered by the Book of Tables.
- The research question can be answered with data for October 1 (for one or more years)
- The research question can be answered by focusing on the primary policy in place for each state/territory as of October 1.

(Note that selected information from the Book of Tables (for copayment amounts, provider payment rates, and market rate survey details) is also available in Excel format (and other formats) on the Child and Family Data Archive website to facilitate use in quantitative analyses. This information is provided in the Supplemental Data Files and Codebook.)

When one or more of the above conditions is not met, the user can turn to the full database (available through the full data files on the Child and Family Data Archive website or the online search tool at https://ccdf.urban.org) for information about policies as of different points in the year, information on when changes occurred, sub-state details, and/or detailed policies not covered in the Book of Tables. Note that the CCDF Policies Database Codebook describes the full content of the database, including all of the policy variables that are coded for each policy category.

How to Read the Data in the Excel File

The Excel workbook contains numerous worksheets. Each worksheet is a data table with information on a particular category of CCDF policy. (The policy categories are described below.)

Each data table contains many rows and columns of information. The first row of the Excel table (one table per Excel sheet) shows the column headings. The additional rows each represent a record of information. A record is all of the information for that category for a given state, county, provider type, and time. In some cases, there is only one record (row) per State/Territory. This occurs if the State/Territory has made no changes in a particular policy area during the time period covered by the database. If a State/Territory makes changes in a certain policy area each year, there is at least one record per year. In some cases, there are multiple records representing variation in policies at the county level or by provider type during a particular time period. By reading across the row, you can see the state, county (or all counties), child care subsidy program name, provider type (or all providers), provider subtype, and dates to which a record applies (in the initial columns), and the policies that are/were in place (in the remaining columns).

Policy Categories

The Excel file is broken into several different tables (worksheets) of information. Most of the tables provide records for different categories of information. The categories of policy are (with corresponding worksheet labels):

- Administration (Administration)
- Appeals (Appeals)
- Basic Application Criteria (Application)
- Asset Tests (AssetTests)
- Terms of Authorization (Authorization)
- Background Checks for Unregulated Providers (BackChecks)
- Basic Eligibility and Other Requirements for Unregulated Providers (BasicElig)
- Requirements for Reporting Changes (ChangeReporting)
- Copayment Adjustments (CopayAdjust)
- Copayment Administration (CopayAdmin)
- Copayment Amount (CopayAmount, CopayAmount2, CopayAmount3)
- Copayment Exemptions (CopayExempt)
- Copayment Income Thresholds (CopayThresholds, CopayThresholds2, CopayThresholds3)
- Early Learning Guidelines (EarlyLearn)
- Basic Criteria for Eligibility (EligCriteria)
- Eligibility Thresholds (EligThresholds)
- Definition of Family (FamilyDef)
- Health and Safety Checklist Requirements for Unregulated Providers (HealthSafety)
- Income Definition (IncomeDef)

- Priority Policies (PriorityPolicies)
- Professional Development (ProfDev)
- Program Development (ProgramDev)
- Other Provider Policies (ProviderPolicies)
- Quality (Quality)
- Redetermination (Redetermination)
- Reimbursement Rate Policies (ReimbursePolicies) (also referred to as provider payment rates)
- Reimbursement Rates (ReimburseRates) (also referred to as provider payment rates)
- Training Requirements for Unregulated Providers (TrainReq)
- TB Prevention Requirements for Unregulated Providers (TubercPrev)
- Verification (Verification)
- Waiting List Policies (WaitList)
- Other Provider Policies: Who May Provide Care (WhoAuthorized)

More detail on the categories of information and the variables included in each category can be found in the CCDF Policies Database Codebook.

For the Copayment Amount and Copayment Income Thresholds categories, there are multiple worksheets for each category. The additional worksheets are used to capture the copayment amounts and thresholds for states that use finer income breaks that exceed the 20 thresholds available in the first worksheet. If a state's full copayment chart (or fee schedule) does not exceed 20 rows, then the additional worksheets will not contain data for the State/Territory. For a more detailed explanation of these categories and variables, see the full CCDF Policies Database Codebook.

Columns of Information

Each of the Excel tables listed above contains the following columns of information:

State – The State/Territory to which the record (row of information) applies. The state FIPS code is listed here. The lookup table for the FIPS codes can be found under the 0_statecodes tab of the Excel document.

County – The county or geographic areas to which the record applies. In some cases, the record will apply to all counties in the state, while in other cases the record will apply to a specific county or geographic area. The lookup table for the county codes can be found under the 0_counties worksheet of the Excel document.

Program – The name of the given state's primary child care subsidy program. The lookup table for the program names can be found under the 0_programs worksheet of the Excel document.

Family Group *(FamilyGroup)* – The family group to which the record applies. This may be families with children with special needs, families receiving TANF, or some other subset of families. In most cases, the record will apply to all families. The lookup table for the family group codes can be found under the 0_familygroups worksheet of the Excel document.

Provider Type *(ProviderType)* – The type of provider to which the policies in the record apply. Provider types include center providers, family child care home providers, group family child care home providers, and in-home providers. More information on how these provider types are defined can be found in the codebook that accompanies the data files. In most cases, the record will apply to all provider types, but for categories that address provider related policies, such as reimbursement (provider payment) rates or health and safety requirements, policies may vary by the type of provider. Specific codes for the provider types can be found under the 0_providertypes worksheet.

Provider Subtype *(ProviderSubtype)* – Additional detail about the type of provider to which the policies in the record apply. In some cases, provider types vary by more than just center, family, group, or in-home care. States may use quality enhancement systems or provide different policies for licensed and non-licensed providers. In these cases, this additional provider type detail is captured under the provider subtype variable. The codes for provider subtype can be found in the 0_providersubtypes worksheet.

Begin Date *(BeginDat)* – The beginning date for the policies captured in the record. This indicates when the policies went into effect. In some cases, a State/Territory may release a policy update that is implemented at a later date than the policy notice. In these cases, the database captures the date the policy was implemented in practice.

End Date *(EndDat)* – The end date for the policies captured in the record. This indicates when the policies were no longer in effect. If any policy in a record changes, an end date is assigned to the record and a new record is started. In some cases, several policies (variables) will have changed between records, while in other cases only one policy may have changed while the other policies are still in effect.

Begin Majority Date *(BeginMajority)* – The beginning date for the policies captured in the record if the record captures the policies that apply to the majority of the people in the State/Territory. When policies vary at the sub-state level multiple records may be coded. The record with a majority date coded to match the begin date is the record that applies to the most populous area in the State/Territory.

End Majority Date *(EndMajority)* – The end date for the policies captured in the record if the record captures the policies that apply to the majority of the people in the State/Territory.

Majority Checkbox *(MajorityRec)* – The checkbox to indicate the primary policy, or record that applies to the majority of the caseload in a given State/Territory and time period. If there is any variation in the State/Territory based on geography, family characteristics, or provider type, the policies shown will be for the most populous area of the state; families with a working parent or guardian, not receiving TANF or transitional child care, with children who do not have special needs, and with one child in care; and licensed center-based care provided at a base level that does not include higher quality or tiered payment rates for providers.

Variables *(with variable names as outlined in the full Codebook)* – The specific policies captured within the category. Each variable is given a name that can then be looked up in the CCDF Policies Database Codebook that accompanies the data files in order to find the definition of the

specific variable, the options and values for coding the variable, and any additional notes on how the variable is coded.

Variable Notes *(with variable names as outlined in the full Codebook)* – The additional notes that accompany each variable. Almost every variable in the database has a notes field that allows coders to document additional information about the variable. This information may be an additional explanation about the State/Territory policy or notes on how the policy varies in given cases. The notes fields' names consist of VariableName_Notes. There are a few exceptions to the inclusion of notes fields. In the case of copayment amounts and thresholds, a separate notes field does not exist for each variable. For eligibility thresholds, there is one notes field for initial eligibility thresholds and one notes field for continuing eligibility thresholds.

Category Notes *(Notes)* – The additional notes that apply to the category as a whole. Each category has a category notes field that allows coders to capture additional notes for a given State/Territory and record. These notes generally apply to the entire category or numerous variables within the category rather than to a specific variable.

Additional Tables

In addition to the categories of policy captured in the Excel file, additional tables (listed here with corresponding worksheet labels) in the Excel file include the codes needed to read the data (as described above):

- Categories (0_categories)
  - Additional internal database information about the categories of policy. Not necessary for use in reading the data files.
- Counties (0_counties)
  - County codes and corresponding county names.
- Enumerators (0_enumerators)
  - Additional internal database information about the variables and variable options. Not necessary for use in reading the data files.
- Family Groups (0_familygroups)
  - Family group codes and corresponding family group names.
- Programs (0_programs)
  - Program codes and corresponding program names.
- Provider Types (0_providertypes)
  - Provider type codes and corresponding provider types.
- Provider Subtypes (0_providersubtypes)
  - Provider subtype codes and corresponding provider subtype names.
- State Codes (0_statecodes)
  - State FIPS codes and corresponding State/Territory names.
- Sub Categories (0_subcategories)
  - Additional internal database information about the sub-categories of policy. Not necessary for use in reading the data files.

- Variables (0_variables)
    - Additional variable information including variable descriptions. Not necessary for use in reading the data files. More detailed variable information is found in the CCDF Policies Database Codebook.

Questions or Comments

Questions or comments regarding the content of the data files or the project in general can be directed to project staff at the Urban Institute (CCDFDatabase@Urban.org).

Questions regarding the downloading or technical aspects of the data files can be directed to the Child and Family Data Archive (CFData-help@umich.edu).