

centers and homes may participate if they meet certain criteria for serving low-income children. Refer to Chapter 20: Payment Policies for more information.

## VIII. ROLE OF THE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

State statute designates the county department of social services (DSS) as the local purchasing agency to administer the SCC Program. DSS may choose to delegate this responsibility to another agency through contractual agreement. The agency that administers the SCC Program at the county level is referred to as the LPA in this manual. If the county DSS administers the subsidy program, the agency is referred to as the LPA. If the county DSS contracts with private nonprofit/for profit agencies such as the local child care resource and referral agency, then that agency is the LPA. In such cases, **the contracting agency assumes the same responsibilities that the DSS has in administering the SCC Program which are described as follows.**

### A. Service Provision

Service provision includes:

1. Providing families with information about available child care resources and the five star licensing system. Refer to the DCD website for more information (<http://www.ncchildcare.net/>).
2. Helping families understand their child care needs and options.
3. Determining the eligibility of the family.
4. Promoting the selection of child care services based on parental choice.
5. Maintaining contact with the parent and the child care provider to ensure that the family is receiving the appropriate service(s) and to remain aware of family issues that may need to be addressed.
6. Issuing vouchers to eligible parents.
7. Enrolling providers in the subsidy program.
8. Making visits to child care providers receiving subsidy funds.

### B. Administrative Accountability

The local DSS receives and manages funds allocated for the delivery of subsidized child care services unless the DSS chooses to contract with another local agency or organization to administer the SCC Program.

Local responsibilities include:

1. Paying the child care and transportation providers for services delivered to eligible families.
2. Maintaining and providing records for review upon request by local, state or federal agencies at the time of a monitoring visit or whenever requested until all audits are complete.
3. Maintaining records for at least three (3) state fiscal years (SFY) or until all state and federal audits are completed.

**NOTE: The LPA must submit a written request to the Section Chief of the Subsidy Services Section and obtain written permission from DCD before purging any child care records.**

Some county governments operate their own child care facilities. Also, some county governments contract with other agencies that operate their own facilities. The county must separate the management of the SCC Program from the child care facility. Both the county and contracting agencies must develop and implement a board approved conflict of interest policy that assures parents are offered the freedom to choose from a variety of child care options. In addition, a notarized copy of the conflict of interest policy must be sent to the Subsidy Services Section of DCD.

**NOTE:** For a detailed listing of suggested responsibilities of a local child care coordinator refer to Attachment 1: SCC Program Responsibilities at the end of the chapter. For further information regarding contracting procedures, contact the Subsidy Services Section (919-662-4561) or refer to Attachment 2: Contract Requirements for County Department of Social Services Agencies at the end of the chapter.

## **IX. ROLE OF THE LOCAL PURCHASING AGENCY**

Some county departments of social services contract with other agencies to administer their SCC Program and earmark their state allocation of subsidized child care funds to a specific agency or organization. In counties served by these agencies, the county DSS has two options for coordinating funding resources with the contracting agency or organizations:

- A. Retain all of its allocation and purchase or provide child care services.
- B. Contract all of its allocation to a contractor who will purchase and/or provide child care services for eligible children in the county.