

Contact 1: Prenotification Letter to State Childcare Administrators

U.S. Department of Labor

Women's Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20210



[Date]

[Name]

[Title]

[Name of Organization]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Dr. /Mr. /Ms.] [Last Name]:

To better measure childcare prices at the local level, the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau publishes the National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP) based on states' market rate surveys (MRS). The NDCP is a comprehensive federal source of county-level childcare prices across the United States.

The NDCP provides states, localities, and other stakeholders with a resource that combines county-level childcare prices and economic indicators that can be used for needs assessments, strategic planning, and evaluation. This resource allows state and federal agencies, policymakers, and researchers to track childcare prices at the local level, measure potential economic impacts, and identify strategies for enhancing childcare affordability and economic security for families. It also provides a valuable resource for families interested in learning more about childcare prices in their local area.

The Women's Bureau is collecting data to update the NDCP for years 2022 through 2024. [Contractor] has been retained to conduct the research for us. We need your help to gather this critical information.

You will soon receive a letter with a request and instructions on how to provide copies of all available childcare market rate survey (MRS) reports that have been conducted by your state for the years 2022 through 2024, and if available, data files or supplemental studies used to create MRS reports that provide childcare prices. We recognize that you may have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology in place of a market rate survey and do not have price data to submit. If this is the case, we will request that you submit all available final reports related to the cost-based analyses for the years 2022 through 2024, and if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling.

Your response is voluntary and may take an average of two hours to complete. Data collected for this project will be aggregated and used for statistical purposes only. No identifying information will be disclosed. In accordance with a data sharing agreement between the Women's Bureau

and the Office of Child Care (OCC), data collected also will be shared with OCC for statistical purposes. The information will not be used in compliance determinations.

We want to be sure your state is represented. With your help, we can update the NDCP to offer the most up-to-date information to your state, policymakers, and the public. To learn more about the Women's Bureau and the NDCP, please visit www.dol.gov/agencies/wb.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Name] (ndcp@dol.gov or 202-693-1000 ext. xxxxx).

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title], Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor

[Name]

Director, Office of Child Care
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Respondents are not required to respond to any information collection unless it displays a valid approval number from the Office of Management and Budget. The OMB Control Number for this collection is: 1290-0025.

Contact 2: Notification Letter to State Childcare Administrators

U.S. Department of Labor

Women's Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20210



[Date]

[Name]

[Title]

[Name of Organization]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear [Dr. /Mr. /Ms.] [Last Name]:

To better measure childcare prices at the local level, the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau publishes the National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP) based on states' market rate surveys (MRS). The NDCP is a comprehensive federal source of local childcare prices across the United States.

The NDCP provides states, localities, and other stakeholders with a resource that combines county-level childcare prices and economic indicators that can be used for needs assessments, strategic planning, and evaluation. This resource allows state and federal agencies, policymakers, and researchers to track childcare prices at the local level, measure potential economic impacts, and identify strategies for enhancing childcare affordability and economic security for families. It also provides a valuable resource for families interested in learning more about childcare prices in their local area.

The Women's Bureau is collecting data to update the NDCP for years 2022 through 2024. [Contractor] has been retained to conduct the research for us. We need your help to gather this critical information.

We ask that you provide copies of all available results of child care market rate surveys (MRS) for years 2022 through 2024 and if available, data files or supplemental studies used to create MRS reports that provide childcare prices. We recognize that you may have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology in place of a market rate survey, and do not have price data to submit. If this is the case, we ask that you submit all available final reports related to the cost-based analyses for years 2022 through 2024, and if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling.

Your response is voluntary and may take an average of two hours to complete. Data collected for this project will be aggregated and used for statistical purposes only. No identifying information will be disclosed. In accordance with a data sharing agreement between the Women's Bureau and the Office of Child Care (OCC), data collected will also be shared with OCC for statistical purposes. This information will not be used in compliance determinations.

We request that you provide data for all studies or surveys for the years 2022 through 2024 no later than [date]. Please submit the reports and data files based on the guidance below:

1. Upload the final copy of the MRS report for each year available from 2022 through 2024 to the secure link created for your state. Please submit a report for each year using the following naming convention: MRSREPORT_XXXX [where XXXX = the year study was published].
2. If there are years in which the final MRS reports submitted do not include childcare prices for each county or county equivalent in your state, upload the extant data file(s) that were used to develop the price estimates for each of those years that include the county name and the prices by age group and provider type. Upload a separate file for each year of data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: MRSDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].
3. If you do not have price data but have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology, please submit the final reports and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling. Upload a separate file for each year of cost data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: COSTDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].

[Contractor, contractor point of contact] is the technical lead on this project. If you have any questions about the project or the process for uploading files, contact [phone, email]

With your help, we can ensure that the NDCP provides the most up-to-date information to your state, policymakers, and the public. To learn more about the Women's Bureau and the NDCP, please visit www.dol.gov/agencies/wb.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Name] (ndcp@dol.gov or 202-693-1000 ext. xxxxx).

Sincerely,

[Name]

[title], Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor

[Name]

Director, Office of Child Care
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Contact 3: Email sent 1 week before deadline

To: Primary contact e-mail

From: [Contractor name]

Re: Women's Bureau Request for Reports and Data on Child Care Prices or Costs

Dear [Dr. /Mr. /Ms.] [Last name]:

As a reminder, the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau is currently updating the National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP), which provides comprehensive information on the price of child care at the local level in the United States. We have previously requested copies of all available child care market rate survey (MRS) reports and data, or cost analyses, for years 2022 through 2024 for your state. To date, we have not received this information.

We request that you provide copies of all available child care market rate survey (MRS) reports for the years 2022 through 2024 no later than [DATE]. We recognize that you may have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology in place of a market rate survey, and do not have price data to submit. If this is the case, we request that you submit all available final reports related to the cost-based analyses for the years 2022 through 2024 and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling.

Your response to this request is voluntary and may take an average of two hours to complete. Data collected for this project will be aggregated and used for statistical purposes only. No identifying information will be disclosed. In accordance with a data sharing agreement between the Women's Bureau and the Office of Child Care (OCC), data collected will also be shared with OCC for statistical purposes. This information will not be used in compliance determinations.

Please submit the reports and any supporting data files, based on the guidance below:

1. Upload the final copy of the MRS report for each year available from 2022 through 2024 to the secure link created for your state. Please submit a report for each year using the following naming convention: MRSREPORT_XXXX [where XXXX = the year study was published].
2. If there are years in which the final MRS reports submitted do not include childcare prices for each county or county equivalent in your state, upload the extant data file(s) that were used to develop the price estimates for each of those years that include the county name and the prices by age group and provider type. Upload a separate file for each year of data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: MRSDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].
3. If you do not have price data but have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology, please submit the final reports and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling. Upload a separate file for each year of cost data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be

converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: COSTDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].

[Contractor, contractor point of contact] is the technical lead on this project. If you have any questions about the project or the process for uploading files, contact [phone, email].

We want to make sure your state is represented. With your help, we can ensure that the NDCP provides the most up-to-date information to your state, policymakers, and the public. To learn more about the Women's Bureau and the NDCP, please visit www.dol.gov/agencies/wb.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Name] (ndcp@dol.gov or 202-693-1000 ext. xxxxx).

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Contact 4A: Non-response follow-up 1 [Telephone]

Call primary contacts at Lead Agency or their designees that have not provided the information

Talking directly to the primary contact

Issues to be highlighted during a telephone call to primary contact from data collection staff: Indicate that you are calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau regarding the Women's Bureau National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP).

1. Point out that they should have received a letter from [Name], [Title] of the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau and from [Name], Director, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Care requesting that they provide Market Rate Survey reports and data, or parallel cost-based reports and data.

“We have been trying to contact you about the Women's Bureau National Database of Childcare Prices. [Name], [Title] of the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau and [Name], Director, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sent a letter requesting that your office provide Market Rate Survey reports and data, or cost data, from 2022 to 2024. Currently, we have not received the data and want to remind you about the importance of providing it.”

2. If needed, tell contact: “We are conducting this data collection to update a database that will provide comprehensive information on the price of child care at the local level in the United States. We want to be sure your state is represented.”
3. If needed, be prepared to respond to common questions such as:
 - I am not the right person to do this.
 - Response: Please let me know who the correct person is and I would be happy to contact him/her.
 - I don't know what you are talking about.
 - Response: The Women's Bureau is undertaking an initiative to update the National Database of Childcare Prices. To support this initiative, we are collecting county-level data from the child care Market Rate Survey (MRS) reports and cost analyses that states have conducted to provide a resource that has local area childcare prices for the entire country. Your response to this request is voluntary and may take an average of two hours to complete.
 - The MRS reports for my state do not include county-level data.

- Response: That is okay. Do you have access to copies of the final MRS reports and the raw data used to develop them? If so, you can submit via a secure portal to our data collection team.
- The report for my state uses an ACF pre-approved, cost-based, alternative methodology.
 - Response: That is okay. We are evaluating how we may be able to include this data. Please submit the report and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost model via secure portal to our data collection team.
- 4. Tell the respondent you will e-mail the instructions and be sure to verify the correct e-mail address.
- 5. Ask the respondent if he or she has any questions and let them know that if they have any questions in the future, they can send an e-mail to [Contact].

Leaving a message

1. If the respondent cannot be reached, leave a voice mail identifying yourself and the request, the purpose of the call, the date of letter referenced, and the action the respondent must take.

Voice mail example: “Hello my name is [staff], and I’m calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau about the National Database of Childcare Prices initiative. We have been trying to contact you about receiving your state’s child care market rate survey or cost analyses and hope that you might be willing to provide the data. Please call us at xxx-xxx-xxxx when you have some time to discuss your participation in the data collection. We want to be sure your state is represented.”
2. During a call cycle, typically a week, leave only one message, but continue to try to contact respondents at different times of day throughout the cycle.

Contact 4B: Incomplete Follow-up 1 [Telephone]

Call primary contact at agency that has submitted some, but not all the requested information.

Talking directly to the primary contact

Issues to be highlighted during a telephone call from data collection staff:

1. Indicate that you are calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau regarding the National Database of Childcare Prices.
2. Thank them for the data that they provided and alert them to the missing data. For example:

“It looks like you provided data for some but not all the years. Do you have data for [missing years]?” Tell the respondent that we are trying to get complete information.

“It looks like you provided data at the state-level only. Do you have data for counties or county equivalents?” Tell the respondent that we are trying to get more detailed information.
3. If needed, be prepared to respond to common questions such as:
 - I am not the right person to do this.
 - Response: Please let me know who the correct person is and I would be happy to contact him/her.
 - The MRS reports for my state do not include county-level data.
 - Response: That is okay. Do you have access to copies of the final MRS reports and the raw data used to develop them? If so, you can submit via a secure portal to our data collection team.
 - The report for my state uses an ACF pre-approved, cost-based, alternative methodology.
 - Response: That is okay. We are evaluating how we may be able to include this data. Please submit the report and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling via secure portal to our data collection team.
4. Tell the respondent you will e-mail the instructions and be sure to verify the correct e-mail address.

5. Ask the respondent if he or she has any questions and let them know that if they have any questions in the future, they can send an e-mail to [Contact].

Leaving a message

1. If the respondent cannot be reached, leave a voice mail identifying yourself and the request, the purpose of the call, the date of letter referenced, and the action the respondent must take.

Voice mail example: “Hello my name is [staff], and I’m calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau about the National Database of Childcare Prices. We received your data for xxxxx years but did not receive the data for xxxx years. We wanted to make sure that was not an oversight and to find out whether the missing data exists. Please call us at xxx-xxx-xxxx when you have some time to discuss this.”

2. During a call cycle, typically a week, leave only one message, but continue to try to contact respondents at different times of the day throughout the cycle.

Contact 5: Reminder email sent 1 week after deadline to non-respondents

To: Primary contact e-mail

From: [Contractor name]

Re: Women's Bureau Request for Reports and Data on Child Care Prices or Costs

Dear [Dr. /Mr. /Ms.] [Last name]:

As a reminder, the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau is currently updating of the National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP), which provides comprehensive information on the price of child care at the local level in the United States. We have previously requested copies of all available child care market rate survey (MRS) reports and data, or cost analyses, for years 2022 through 2024 for your state. To date, we have not received this information

We request that you provide copies of all available child care market rate survey (MRS) reports for the years 2022 through 2024 as soon as possible. We recognize that you may have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology in place of a market rate survey, and do not have price data to submit. If this is the case, we request that you submit all available final reports related to the cost-based analyses for the years 2022 through 2024 and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling.

Your response to this request is voluntary and may take an average of two hours to complete. Data collected for this project will be aggregated and used for statistical purposes only. No identifying information will be disclosed. In accordance with a data sharing agreement between the Women's Bureau and the Office of Child Care (OCC), data collected will also be shared with OCC for statistical purposes. This information will not be used in compliance determinations.

Please submit the reports and any required data files based on the guidance below:

1. Upload the final copy of the report for each year available from 2022 through 2024 to the secure link created for your state. Please submit a report for each year using the following naming convention: MRSREPORT_XXXX [where XXXX = the year study was published].
2. If there are years in which the final reports submitted do not include childcare price estimates for each county or county equivalent in your state, upload the extant data file(s) that were used to develop the price estimates for each of those years that include the county name and the prices by age group and provider type. Upload a separate file for each year of data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: MRSDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].
3. If you do not have price data but have conducted a pre-approved, cost-based alternative methodology, please submit the final reports and, if available, a list and description of the data sources used in the cost modeling. Upload a separate file for each year of cost data to the secure link created for your state in an Excel format or other file format that can be

converted to Excel. Upload the data for each year using the following naming convention: COSTDATA_XXXX [where XXXX = year study was published].

[Contractor, contractor point of contact] is the technical lead on this project. If you have any questions about the project or the process for uploading files, contact [phone, email].

We want your state to be represented. With your help, we can ensure that the NDCP provides the most up-to-date information to your state, policymakers, and the public. To learn more about the Women's Bureau and the NDCP, please visit www.dol.gov/agencies/wb.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Name] (ndcp@dol.gov or 202-693-1000 ext. xxxxx).

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Attachment 1

National Database of Childcare Prices

The National Database of Childcare Prices will collect data on the following topics. The information requested for this database may have been collected as part of the state's Market Rate Survey used to develop the Child Care and Development Fund Plan or published in the state's child care Market Rate Survey report. For those states that have adopted a pre-approved cost-based alternative methodology in place of a market rate survey, we request that you submit data related to the cost-based analyses. If your state does not have all the data elements requested, please submit as many data elements as you have available.

We are interested in all Market Rate Survey data you have available for these data elements between 2022 and 2024. If your state did not conduct data collection at the county level, please contact [contact name, email, number] for assistance. We appreciate your help in making this the most complete and accessible database on childcare prices for all counties in the United States.

General Survey Information:

- State
- Geographic reporting level (state, region, county, cluster)
- Year and month(s) of survey
- Mode of survey administration (mail, phone, internet)
- Survey response rates for center-based care
- Survey response rates for family/home-based child-care

Childcare Prices:

- Median price of center-based care (infants)
- Median price of center-based care (toddlers)
- Median price of center-based care (preschoolers)
- Median price of center-based care (school-age children)
- Median price of family/home-based care (infants)
- Median price of family/home-based care (toddlers)
- Median price of family/home-based care (preschoolers)
- Median price of family/home-based care (school-age children)
- Median additional fees in addition to regular rate for center-based care (e.g., registration, enrollment, supplies, activities, etc.)
- Median additional fees in addition to regular rate for family/home-based care (e.g., registration, enrollment, supplies, activities, etc.)

Additional information:

- Indicate if prices are hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly
- Indicate ages used to define infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age
- Indicate pricing structure (e.g., part-time/school year or full-time/break) for school-age
- Indicate pricing method if pricing other than the median price is provided

