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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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April 17, 2024

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to pay the Baker Center for Children and Families (VC#161221 B001), Boston, MA, in the amount of \$22,800 for the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors annual membership dues, effective upon Governor and Council approval, for the period from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Funding source: 39% Federal Funds, 61% General Funds.

**05-95-42-421010-29560000 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SVS, HHS: HUMAN SERVICES, CHILD PROTECTION, OFFICE OF DIRECTOR - DCYF**

State Fiscal Year	Class / Account	Job Number	Class Title	Total Amount
2025	026-500251	42105602	Organizational Dues	\$22,800

**EXPLANATION**

Approval of this request will enable the State to share information pertinent to policy, practice, and operational issues through its membership in New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors. Additionally, membership will position the Department to continue identifying economic, social, and political trends affecting service delivery. Membership also provides opportunities for communication and peer networking with other member agencies in addition to regional and national groups who share similar goals and interests with the Department. This association has proven to be beneficial to the State's ability to develop superior program and operational strategies, leading to improved public management and service delivery.

Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Executive Council organization dues and membership approval submissions.

1. How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?

Since 1984, the Baker Center for Children and Families has served as home base for New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, a consortium of child welfare agency

leaders and staff members from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Agency leaders from the New England area created the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors in an effort to develop and implement policies promoting competent child-welfare practices. The Department has been a member of this organization since State Fiscal Year 1995.

2. Is there any other organization that provides the same or similar benefits which your agency belongs to?

No. The New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors is the only association of its kind, allowing New England-based child welfare collaboration, sharing of common projects in addition to operational, budgetary and programmatic consultations in a unique setting.

3. How many other states belong to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?

All six (6) New England states are members. The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families is the only member from New Hampshire.

4. How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc.)

The dues structure is based on a standard fee for all states.

5. What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?

Benefits to membership, include access to: publication of position papers; data reports; and relevant testimony. Additionally, maintaining membership status allows for coordination of three (3) to four (4) meetings per year that rotate among the New England states. Membership also allows for coordination of special presentations to target audiences including, but not limited to Congressional, national and regional organizations. Finally, membership allows for representation by staff at national meetings regarding Association sponsored activities and coordination of developing intervention models to serve special populations such as drug-exposed infants.

6. Are training or educational/ research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.

Training for administrative staff on a variety of pertinent issues is included in the cost of membership. Other training and informational sessions include State Child Welfare Staff Attorneys, Information Technology Staff and training Directors. Membership also helps support the New England Youth Collaborative that fosters the inclusion of youth voices in policy and practice decisions.

7. Is the membership required in order to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.

No. However, the Department has become aware of, and has received valuable information regarding, federal funding for Child Welfare initiatives, as well as other funding streams for regional convening and trainings, through its membership. Specifically, the Division for Children,

Youth and Families has leveraged its membership to access federal dollars used to improve State programming by participating in group-directed strategies concerning innovative child welfare programming.

8. Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel to include the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination if known and purposes of membership supported trips.

This membership fee covers the cost of all travel related expenses to the quarterly meetings, policy and practice discussions and Regional Convening. The Department's three representatives, listed below in section 9, travel to other New England states, on a rotating basis, for three (3) regional meetings and two (2) regional conferences per year.

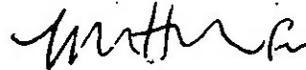
9. Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and/or officers of the organization.)

The Department has three (3) representatives from the Division for Children, Youth and Families who are directly involved with the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors.

10. Explain in detail any negative impact to the State if the Agency did not belong to this organization.

Should the Governor and Executive Council not approve this request, the Division for Children, Youth and Families would lose a valuable source of knowledge and information relative to cost saving and service improvement practices used by other member states. More specifically, the State would lose the ability to participate in the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, group-directed strategies, concerning innovative child welfare programming, which have assisted the Division for Children, Youth and Families in accessing federal funds to support improved programming. The Department would also sacrifice the opportunity to collaborate with peers to share goals, strategies and information on improved practices in public management and service delivery, all of which significantly benefit New Hampshire residents.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori A. Weaver  
Commissioner

