**Section 50.610 Child Care Collaboration Program**

a) A Child Care Collaboration is defined as any braiding of Illinois child care subsidy funds or programs with other early childhood funds or programs to create higher quality full day, full year services for eligible families with young children. The purposes of the Department's Child Care Collaboration Program are:

1) to facilitate collaboration between Illinois child care and other early childhood programs; and

2) to increase, through collaboration, the quality and quantity of early care and education for families in Illinois who are working and/or participating in an approved training/education program.

b) Child care collaborative arrangements approved by the Department under this Section will benefit participating early childhood programs, children and families by providing a higher quality of care. Head Start, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) pre-kindergarten, and child care providers eligible under this Section must be able to demonstrate this increased quality of care.

c) All Illinois early childhood programs using child care subsidy funds in collaboration with other funding, for example, Head Start or ISBE pre-kindergarten, must comply with this Section.

d) The Department will approve child care collaborative arrangements under this Section provided:

1) the provider can demonstrate how the collaboration improves the quality of care;

2) children are served in one location for their full day of care;

3) parent co-payments are collected and documented according to existing Child Care Rules (see Sections 50.310 and 50.320);

4) the provider can demonstrate how the collaboration is coordinated with the broader local early childhood community and is based on community need;

5) the provider is qualified and eligible to receive child care reimbursement (see Sections 50.240 and 50.410) and is a profit or non-profit early childhood center or licensed family child care home; and

6) the provider is using a child care contract or a child care certificate.

e) If the conditions of eligibility in subsection (d) of this Section are met and the collaboration is approved by the Department, eligibility will be determined in accordance with all current Child Care Rules (see Sections 50.230 and 50.235), as specified by this Part, with the following three exceptions:

1) approved Child Care Collaboration Programs will determine child and/or family eligibility annually;

2) approved Child Care Collaboration Programs will use a 90-day job loss grace period. Families are limited to one 90-day job search in any 12-month period; and

3) children and/or families in approved Child Care Collaboration Programs will maintain indefinite eligibility for child care when the child's or family's participation in the collaboration is part of the current TANF Responsibility and Services Plan.

(Source: Amended at 36 Ill. Reg. 12104, effective July 10, 2012)