

## Maine Child Care Licensing

Child Care Licensing's primary mission is to ensure the health and safety of children and to support preventive, protective, and quality child care services. Child Care Licensing meets this mission through monitoring, providing technical assistance, and establishing partnerships with providers, parents, and the child care stakeholder community.

The Department's Child Care Licensing Unit provides oversight and support of licensed Child Care Facilities and Family Child Care Providers with 18 Child Care Licensing Specialists and 3 Licensing Supervisors. All children and families, regardless of age, ethnicity, cultural background, gender, socioeconomic status, or ability, are afforded the same protections under law and regulations for child care services.



### *What is the Monthly Message?*

Child Care Licensing's Monthly Message is being sent to all of you, Maine's valuable licensed child care providers! We'll be including general updates, reminders, and bite size interpretive guidelines. As a reminder, our goal over the course of this year is to create a single comprehensive interpretive guide for each child care licensing rule. Think of this as a compliance guide that allows for a shared understanding of the requirements, the intent/rationale, and for some requirements a description of how the rule is measured. We hope that these monthly bite size interpretive guidelines will immediately increase understanding, trust, and compliance.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month! We honor the hard work and dedication of our Child Welfare colleagues within the Office of Child and Family Services. We would like to make you aware of the Out of Home Investigation Team (OOH) established in accordance with Maine law to investigate reports of suspected child abuse and neglect that may have occurred in a facility or by a person subject to licensure, approval, or funded by Department. When a report of suspected abuse or neglect is received by the Department regarding a child care provider or staff member, OOH will be assigned to investigate.

### Staff *Highlights*

Farewell to Child Care Licensing Specialist, Jen Martell- Pettit. Jen's last day with Child Care Licensing is April 28, 2023. Jen has worked for Child Care licensing for the past six years and joined the Department following a lengthy career as a child care provider and administrator. Jen has worked in the field of Early Childhood for 35 years and has made many wonderful connections. We will notify all of Jen's current providers of who to contact while we search for her replacement. We wish Jen well as she turns the page to the next chapter, she will be greatly missed.

## Important Reminders

- Please review the many reporting requirements detailed in Section 6 of 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 33, Family Child Care Provider Licensing and Section 6 of 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 32, Child Care Facility Licensing Rule. Given that April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we would like to highlight your responsibility under Maine law as a mandated reporter to report **all** suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department. Your requirements are detailed in Section 6(B) and Section 11 of both rules.

*Section 6(B.) Mandatory report of suspected Abuse or Neglect. Any provider suspecting Abuse or Neglect must immediately report this information to Child Protective Intake Services, 1-800-452-1999, TTY 1-800-963-9490 which is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*

- 1. The provider must maintain documentation, not maintained in the Child's record, that a report has been made.*
- 2. All reporting of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, and serious injuries of a Child who is under six months of age or otherwise non-ambulatory, must comply with 22 MRS §4011-A.*

### **Section 11. Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect**

- A. **Requirement to report child abuse or neglect.** Every Provider or Staff Member must immediately contact the Department of Health and Human Service's Child Protective Intake hotline (800-452-1999) when they suspect Child Abuse or Neglect.*
- B. **Provider requirement to inform.** The Provider must inform all Staff Members during orientation of their status as Mandated Reporters and their responsibility to report to the Department of Health and Human Services whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect Abuse or Neglect of a Child, and comply with ongoing Mandated Reporter training for all Staff Members as provided in Section 8 of this Rule.*
- C. **Written instruction provided.** Staff members must receive written instructions regarding Child Abuse or Neglect reporting that contains a summary of the State of Maine Child abuse reporting statute and a statement that they will not be discharged or disciplined solely because they have made a Child Abuse or Neglect report.*
- D. **Hotline number posted.** The Provider must ensure that the telephone number of the Department's Child Protective Intake hotline is posted in a readily accessible central location on the Premises.*

- In addition to your requirement to report suspected abuse and neglect, Maine law requires that all child care staff members complete mandated reporter training every four years. This requirement can also be found in Section 8 of both rules. You can access Department approved mandated reporter training at the following links: [IlookOut](#) or [State of Maine Mandated Reporter Training](#).
- We would like to bring to your attention that the link to the Child Care Immunization Standards is incorrect in 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 32, Child Care Facility Licensing Rule as it was updated just after the rule went into effect. The updated link can be found at [Childcare Immunization Standards](#).

## **Interpretive Guidelines**

**(Please refer to 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 for a complete review of all requirements)**

- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 7(E) Development of a crisis plan is a requirement of rule. This is different than your emergency preparedness plan (or Y.I.K.E.S. plan). This is a written plan for how a Child Care Staff Member will obtain help when they are the only Child Care Staff Member present if an emergency should arise.
- Ch. 32 5(E)(2)(1) & 8(A)(1) and Ch. 33 5(E)(3) & 8(A)(1) Within the first week of employment all Child Care Staff Members must be trained in fire drill and other emergency and disaster procedures. There needs to be proof of completion in the Child Care Staff Member's personnel record.
- Ch. 32 8(B) and Ch. 33 8(A)(2-13) Within the first 90 days of beginning employment all Child Care Staff Members must complete orientation training as outlined in rule. This also includes substitutes, volunteers, practicum students, student Teachers, and program Directors. The only exception is for practicum students, student Teachers, and high school student volunteers who are not required to complete CPR and First Aid, although it is strongly encouraged.
- Ch. 32 8(D) and Ch. 33 8(B)(6) On going annual training must be from a qualified in person or online source that provides proof of completion such as a certificate. If you have questions as to whether a particular training is acceptable or if the documentation meets the requirement, please reach out to your Child Care Licensing Specialist.
- Ch. 32 8(B)(12) & 11(B) and Ch. 33 8(A)(13) & 11(B) All Child Care Staff Members are required to participate in mandated reporter training every four years. We have unfortunately seen cases of failure to report suspected child abuse and neglect, please review reporting requirements with Child Care Staff Members on an ongoing basis. Please be sure to emphasize that this requirement includes suspected child abuse or neglect within the child care program.
- Ch. 32 8(C)(1) and Ch. 33 8(B) All Child Care Staff Members must register with Maine's Professional Network, Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ). Please note just because a Child Care Staff Member has participated in a MRTQ training in the past it does not mean they are a member of the registry.
- Ch. 32 5(E)(2)(1) & 8(D) and Ch. 33 5(E)(3) Child Care Staff Members can provide proof of annual required training hours with their Professional Development Profile (PDP) which can be obtained through the Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) registry log in page. It is important that any training certificates, transcripts etc. that aren't completed directly through MRTQ are provided on a regular basis to MRTQ for training to be up to date. By providing a PDP to your Child Care Licensing Specialist instead of training certificates, training record reviews can be completed much more quickly, which in turn will make inspections go more quickly. If you need instructions on how to access a PDP, please contact your Child Care Licensing Specialist.

***Thank you for all that you do for Maine children and families.***