

## 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.

### Important Correction!

Oops, in January's monthly message under the background check reminders we said an individual could request and receive the Email with their eligibility status. It is actually only the licensed provider who may make this Email request and receive the status. We apologize for the error and any inconvenience this may have caused. Here's what we should have said...

Five business days following an individual's fingerprint appointment a licensed provider may Email the address below to receive the individual's eligibility status. This Email may be used as verification for a maximum of two weeks, until the official Letter of Eligibility is received in the mail. Please send an Email with the individual's full name, date of birth and the Transaction ID number (TME #) provided at the time of registration to [Childcarecheck.dhhs@maine.gov](mailto:Childcarecheck.dhhs@maine.gov).

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP®) is an early childhood mental health consultation service which helps early childhood educators and caregivers of young children ages 0-8 build their skills to effectively respond to the social-emotional needs of young children. ECCP® provides experienced early childhood mental health consultants who work directly with Child Care Providers and Early Childhood Educators to identify and practice strategies to effectively manage challenging behaviors and social-emotional development of young children. This free service is expanding statewide in 2023. Stay tuned for more information to follow.

## CHILD CARE LICENSING MONTHLY MESSAGE FEBRUARY 2023

### Staff Highlights

Welcome Child Care Licensing Specialist Brandi Pelletier. Brandi comes to the Department with a wealth of education, training and experience. Brandi holds an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education, a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Special Ed., and is currently working on her Master's degree in Special Education. Brandi has 13 years of experience working in child care settings as both a teacher and center director. Brandi will be covering portions of Cumberland and Androscoggin Counties.

Child Care Licensing Specialist Sheila Single is retiring after 31 years with the Department. Sheila has worked in numerous programs within the Office of Child and Family Services including, Child Protective Services, Foster Home Licensing, Foster Home Investigations and Child Care Licensing. Sheila received a Governor's Longevity Award in 2022 for 30 years of dedicated State service. Sheila will be greatly missed by all who have been privileged to work with her.

**Happy Retirement Sheila!**

### Reminders

- The parent handbook and staff manual may be combined as one document provided all required components of each are included, see Child Care Facility Licensing Rule, Ch. 32, Section 2(F)(6) and Section 2(F)(9) or Family Child Care Provider Licensing Rule, Ch. 33 Section 2(G)(4) and 2(G)(7). Your Child Care Licensing Specialist must review all components, including your policies. If this review has not yet occurred, please contact your Licensing Specialist as soon as possible.
- Family Child Care Providers must have a staff manual, even if you do not have or intend to have any Staff Members working for you. The required policies for the staff manual pertain to you, the licensed Family Child Care Provider as well. As mentioned above, you may combine both handbooks into one.
- The written policy for handling all suspected instances of child abuse or neglect and the written policy to follow if an allegation of child abuse or neglect is made against any Child Care Staff Member must include all components as required by the rules.
- All inspection reports must be posted in a location visible to parents and guardians following a licensing inspection. Page one must be the top page posted. Please ensure that other documents are not posted on top of the inspection report. This will prevent the report from being partially or entirely obscured.
- Licensing action and other postings required by the Department must also be posted in a location visible to parents and guardians and must remain posted until your Child Care Licensing Specialist indicates that it may be removed from posting at the program.
- Each enrolled child must have their own separate child record. Siblings may no longer share a child record.

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- Adult household members who provide care to, supervision of or who have unsupervised access to children must have a personnel record and adhere to specific training and certification requirements as specified in Ch. 33.
- Attendance should be done at the point of arrivals and departures for both children and Child Care Staff Members. Please do not complete ahead of time. Completing ahead of time could cause confusion during an emergency situation. Your Child Care Licensing Specialist also needs to be able to view accurate attendance to determine if staff to child ratios are in compliance. Please ensure an administrator of your digital attendance record is on site and available at all times, to grant quick access to your Child Care Licensing Specialist.

### **Interpretive Guidelines**

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

- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 Section 5(A)(2). All child attendance records must include the date, year, and start and end time of each child. The intent of this rule is to have a clear understanding, at all times, of which children are in a particular group/classroom. If a child leaves for an appointment the child must be signed out, and if the child returns following the appointment, they will need to be signed back in. If a child is moved from one group to another (one classroom to another) the child must be signed out of the group they were in and signed into the group they are moving to. This also applies when using applications such as Brightwheel, HiMama, etc...
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 Section 5(A)(3). All attendance for Child Care Staff Members must include actual hours worked and break times in which a Child Care Staff Member is not in a caregiving role and are not counted in staff to child ratio. Similar to child attendance, if a Child Care Staff Member leaves for a break, appointment, etc... they must be signed out and then signed back in upon their return. If a Child Care Staff Member moves from one group to another (one classroom to another) they must be signed out of the group they were in and signed into the group they are moving to.
- Ch. 32 Section 5(D)(1)(a-w) and Ch. 33 Section 5(D)(1)(a-v). Child records must have all required components outlined in rule upon the first day of attendance with the exception of a record of immunization. A child immunization record needs to be provided within 30 days of the child's first enrollment into the program. Receipt of a record of immunization is not based on child attendance.
- Ch. 32 Section 5(E)(2)(a-l) and Ch. 33 Section 5(E)(2)(a-g). Personnel records are required for full and part-time Child Care Staff Members, Substitutes, Volunteers, Practicum Students, Student Teachers, and Program Directors.
- Ch. 32 Section 5(E)(2)(a-l) and Ch. 33 Section 5(E)(2)(a-g). Personnel records must include all components as required by rule prior to a Child Care Staff Member beginning employment. Substitutes, Volunteers, Practicum Students, and Student Teachers are not required to have an annual evaluation or ongoing training in their personnel record.
- Ch. 32 Section 12(A)(4)(a) and Ch. 33 Section 7(F)(5)(a). In order for a Child Care Staff Member to be considered fully immunized for tetanus, pertussis, and diphtheria (Tdap), they must be able to show proof of receiving the immunization or a booster within the past ten years.