

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?

Staff Highlights

Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) Warm Line

The Warm Line provides preventative and non-emergency person-to-person support and resources. MRTQ's Warm Line is staffed by professionals with expertise in inclusive practices, disabilities, children's health, social and emotional development, behavior, and early childhood mental health.

The staff can:

- Talk through an issue or problem with you.
- Provide you with resources and strategies that you can use in your program.
- Share information about other MRTQ PDN services that could support your program.
- Assist you in making connections to other community or national resources and supports.

Call toll-free at 1-844-209-5964 or email: mrtq.warmline@maine.edu

Welcome Child Care Licensing Specialist Jennie Johnson. Jennie comes to the Department with extensive experience in Early Childhood Education. Jennie holds an Associate Early Childhood Credential from the American Montessori Society and was also a Family Child Care Provider. Jennie has many years of experience in child care settings and most recently was the Director of a Montessori preschool. Jennie began at Children's Licensing and Investigation Services on Monday, June 12, 2023, and will be covering parts of Cumberland County.

Important Reminders/Updates

- A first-draw lead water sample is required as part of the 5-year water test for Family Child Care Providers and Child Care Facilities with wells. Please be sure to specifically request a first-draw lead water test, which is a 1-liter capacity sample bottle.
- All Child Care Staff Members must complete the initial 6-hour Health and Safety training through Maine Roads to Quality and the 2-hour update annually thereafter. The annual renewal must be completed on or before the date of expiration. Instructions on how to access the training can be found here: https://www.mrtq.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Health_Safety_On-Demand.pdf
- The Child Abuse and Neglect portion of MRTQ's Health and Safety training does not count toward the required mandated reporter training. Similarly, the transportation section does not count toward the transportation training for those who transport. Please contact your Child Care Licensing Specialist for training resources if needed.
- The use of physical restraint with children is not allowed without explicit approval by a child's licensed clinician. Child Care Staff Members performing restraint must have documentation of appropriate training. Examples of acceptable trainings include but are not limited to: The Mandt System and QBS Safety-Care Behavioral Safety Training. Documentation that the use of restraint with a child is approved must be kept in the child's record.
- The time requirement of 60 minutes of active play outdoors daily for children over the age of 12 months does not need to occur consecutively. The 60 minutes may be broken up over the course of the day into smaller increments. Infants must go outside daily. The exception to these requirements is when weather presents a risk to Children in accordance with Child Care Weather Watch and the Air Quality Index. Gross motor activity must be substituted for outdoor time in situations where inclement weather presents a risk. The Child Care Weather Watch can be found on the Children's Licensing and Investigation Services website. The air quality index can be checked at: <https://www.airnow.gov/>.
- Ch. 32 14(H) In Child Care Facilities with a capacity of 13 or more, maximum group size requirements outside may only be exceeded when all components of rule 14(H)(11)(a through d) are met.

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 12(A)(1)(a) All enrolled Children must have a record of immunization on file within 30 days of first attending the child care program. It must include all immunizations as outlined in the Child Care Immunization Standards: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/immunization/documents/Childcare%20Immunization%20Standards.pdf>. The 30-day timeline begins on the child's first day of attendance regardless of whether or not the child attends the child care program again within the 30-day period. School age children enrolled in licensed child care programs must also have all immunizations required by the Child Care Immunization Standards.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 12(A)(1)(a) The Maine CDC has a Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for ages 18 years and younger that has an easy-to-read timeline of when immunizations are due

CHILD CARE LICENSING MONTHLY MESSAGE

JUNE 2023

based on a Child's age. This may be a helpful resource for you in determining if a Child's immunization record is up to date. You can go to the following link to print off the immunization schedule resource: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs-child-combined-schedule.pdf>

- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 12(A)(1)(c) As per State of Maine law religious and philosophical immunization exemptions are no longer permitted for Children or Child Care Staff Members. Medical exemptions are allowed when specific criteria have been met and when determined to be medically inadvisable by the child's medical provider.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 12(A)(1)(c) Children who are behind on their immunizations may attend the child care program (unless your individual policy is to the contrary) when a specific plan/schedule to "catch up" on immunizations has been provided within 30 days of enrollment. The plan must include the specific immunizations that are behind, and the approximate dates for immunization until fully immunized. The plan must be signed by a medical doctor (MD), Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Nurse Practitioner (N.P.) or a Physician's Assistant (P.A.) who is licensed in the State of Maine.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 12(F)(1)(2) If a program uses an application such as Brightwheel, HiMama, etc. and uses these applications to inform parents or legal guardians of an incident/accident involving their Child in lieu of a paper incident or accident report, there needs to be a mechanism for documentation of acknowledgement by the parent or legal guardian that the incident/accident report has been received. The documentation must also include the date the incident/accident report was received.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 14(D)(2) As per the State Fire Marshal's Office and rule there needs to be at least one carbon monoxide detector installed on every level of each home or facility. This excludes attics unless there is a heat source that would require the need for a detector. Carbon monoxide detectors need to be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 14(P)(2) When conducting monthly fire drills the smoke detector or pull alarms must be used when completing the drill. It is important for Children to become accustomed to the sound and to associate the need to evacuate the building when it is heard.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 14(Q)(2) Two evacuation drills must be conducted during the license year. These need to be drills in which the building is evacuated, and not a shelter in place or lock down drill, although shelter in place and lock down drills are encouraged to be done in addition to the two required evacuation drills. The drill can be a table top exercise, or a simulated drill with just Child Care Staff Members. Please do not actually put Children in vehicles to take them to your evacuation location during a drill.
- Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 16(A)(6) Foods with high salt or sugar content such as cookies, cake, candy, potato chips, corn chips etc. must now be limited to special occasions only, such as holiday and birthday celebrations. Soda is no longer allowed to be served.

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