

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

Rising Stars for ME Enrollment Deadline

It is a requirement for all licensed childcare providers to maintain a valid Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) certificate. If you have not already enrolled in Rising Stars for ME, your certificate will expire on 11/1/2023. Please go to www.risingstarsforme.org and log in using your MRTQ Registry email and password.

If you fail to renew your QRIS certificate, the families participating in the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) will be required to locate a new participating child care provider or will be responsible for the full cost of child care services. Please inform impacted parents that they can search for child care providers at:

<https://earlycaremaine.org>

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/child-care/qrqs>.

Welcome back to Children’s Licensing & Investigation Services! Joan Perry who was a Child Care Licensing Specialist and Pam Sennett, who was an Out of Home Investigator will be filling in on a part – time basis for the next several months. Joan and Pam have over 50 years of combined experience working with Children’s Licensing and Investigation Services. Joan and Pam have come aboard to support the CCLS’s who are dedicating most of their time on development of our new data management system.

Attention: Application Fees are not required at this time. Please do not send in a fee with your renewal or change application.



Important Reminders

New Child Care Staff Members cannot work directly with Children until they have completed a comprehensive fingerprint background check and have received a Letter of Eligibility. They must specifically complete the DHHS/Child Care Provider check through IdentoGO. A Department of Education, or other type of fingerprint background check is not acceptable.

Children's Licensing and Investigation's Serious Injury Report form must be completed anytime a child has an injury or illness which requires medical attention from a physician or other medical personnel, including, but not limited to, an emergency room visit and/or hospitalization, including those that are the result of an accident involving transportation to or from a Child Care Facility sponsored event. This must be completed in addition to any program accident/incident report forms that are completed. The form can be found on our website at: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/child-care-licensing/becoming-a-childcare-provider/child-care-provider-forms>, it is currently labeled as Serious Injury/Illness Report under the heading Sample Parent/Child Record Forms.

Interpretive Guidelines

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

We are continuing to work on compiling a comprehensive document with all the interpretive guidelines that we have developed and included in the Monthly Messages over the course of the year. Since July a few additional interpretive guidelines have been developed:

Ch. 33 1(15) Family Child Care Provider means a person who provides child care in that person's home on a regular basis, for consideration, for 3 to 12 Children under 13 years of age who are not the Children of the Provider or who are not residing in the Provider's home, and Ch. 33 7 (2) Children living with the Provider who are over four years of age are not counted in determining the staff-Child ratio. Children living with the Provider under four years of age are counted in the staff-Child ratio. This means that all rules in the Family Child Care Provider Licensing Rule apply to a licensed Family Child Care provider who has children age 4 years and younger residing in the home.

Ch. 33 1(27) Licensed Capacity means the number and ages of Children, specified on the License, allowed to be on the Premises at any one time. In a licensed Family Child Care this includes any Children on the premises (except the provider's own Children age 4 and up), including any visiting Children.

Ch. 33 2 (8c) The Provider must obtain approval from the Maine Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal or designee, which specifically notes where childcare may be provided (basements, specific rooms within property, and second or higher floors, including any restrictions on the ages of Children). This does not include children under the age of 4 residing in the home. They are allowed to sleep in their own bedroom even if it is on the second floor of the home.

Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 5(D) Child record forms and paperwork must be signed by the Parent or Legal Guardian. If a child is in Foster Care and their Legal Guardian is the State of Maine, the assigned DHHS Caseworker must complete and sign all paperwork as the Legal Guardian of the child, unless there is documentation in writing from the Caseworker that the Foster parent has permission to complete and sign all child care related documents.

Ch. 32 and Ch. 33 5(D) Child records must be updated annually. This does not require new Child enrollment forms to be completed by families unless there are multiple updates. Be on the lookout for an annual update verification form that will be uploaded to our website soon.

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