
**SUMMARY OF
LICENSING
STANDARDS
FOR
DAY CARE
CENTERS**

Introduction

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is responsible for licensing day care centers. When a day care center is licensed, it means that a DCFS licensing representative has inspected the facility and the facility was found to meet the minimum licensing requirements. A license is valid for three years. The day care center's license must be posted. It will indicate the maximum number of children allowed in the facility and the areas where children may receive care.

Licensed day care facilities are inspected annually by DCFS licensing staff. If a complaint has been received regarding a violation of the licensing standards of a day care center, a licensing representative will conduct a licensing complaint investigation to determine if the alleged violation should be substantiated or unsubstantiated. Individuals may contact the Day Care Information Line to learn of substantiated violations.

Day Care Information Line **1-877-746-0829**

This statewide toll-free information line provides information to the public on the past history and record, including substantiated violations, of licensed day care homes, day care centers, and group day care homes. This number operates Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Summary of Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers

The following is a summary of the licensing standards for day care centers. It has been prepared for you so that you may monitor the care provided to your child. This is a summary and does not include all of the licensing standards for a day care center. State licensing standards are *minimum* standards. If you observe a violation of any of these standards, you are encouraged to discuss your concerns with the day care center operator. In most cases, parents and day care operators are able to resolve the parents' concerns and issues. If you believe the day care operator is not responding to your concerns and may not be meeting state licensing standards, you may make a complaint to the local DCFS Licensing Office or by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-2873 and stating that you want to make a licensing complaint. A DCFS licensing representative will investigate

your complaint and report the results back to you. The day care center is required to provide a copy of its own written policies regarding the operation of the facility to each staff person and to parents of enrolled children.

Staffing

- The day care center must have a qualified child care director on site at all times. The director must be at least 21 years old, have completed two years of college or have equivalent experience and credentials.
 - Early childhood teachers must be at least 19 years old, have two years of college or have equivalent experience and credentials.
 - School-age workers must be at least 19 years of age and at least five years older than the oldest child in their care. They must have completed one year of college or have the equivalent experience and credentials.
 - Early childhood assistants and school-age assistants must have a high school diploma or the equivalent and must work under direct supervision of an early childhood teacher or a school-age worker.
 - Student and youth aides must be at least 14 years of age, at least five years older than the oldest child in their care, and must work under direct supervision of an early childhood teacher or a school-age worker.
 - Student and youth aides are not generally counted for purposes of maintaining staff/child ratios.
 - The director and all child care staff must have 15 hours of in-service training annually.
 - All staff must have current medical reports on file and are subject to background checks for any record of criminal conviction or child abuse and neglect.
 - A person certified in first aid, including CPR and the Heimlich maneuver, must be present at all times.
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