



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

 Office of Child Care

2025 State and Territory CCDF Administrators Meeting (STAM)

July 22–24, 2025

Hyatt Regency Reston
Reston, Virginia



Maximizing Lead Agency Flexibilities to Expand Child Care Access

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Agenda

- CCDF Purposes
- Lead Agency Licensing and CCDF Health and Safety Requirements
- Flexibilities in Lead Agency Licensing and CCDF Health and Safety Requirements
- Flexible Uses of CCDF Quality Funds
- State Highlights
- Small Group Activity





CCDF Purposes Revisited

45 C.F.R. 98.1 Purposes.

1. To allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;
2. To promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suits their family's needs;
3. To encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings;
4. To assist States in delivering high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;
5. To assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including State regulations);
6. To improve child care and development of participating children; and
7. To increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings.





Lead Agency Licensing and CCDF Requirements

Lead Agency Licensing

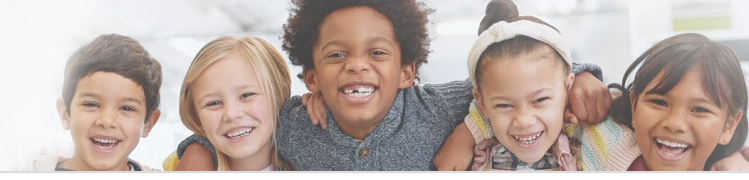
- Requirements and exemptions for licensing determined by the Lead Agency
- May apply to providers regardless of subsidy participation
- Limited federal parameters
 - Example: Must include background checks
- May overlap with CCDF requirements

CCDF Health and Safety Requirements

- Requires standards, training, and inspections for all CCDF providers, unless the Lead Agency exempts relatives
- Applies only to CCDF providers, regardless of licensing status

Lead Agencies determine how CCDF health and safety requirements are implemented.





CCDF Requirements for Lead Agency Licensing

- Lead Agency must have process for licensing providers.
- Licensing exemptions must be described in CCDF Plan.
- All licensed providers must complete criminal background check established in CCDBG Act.
- Licensed CCDF providers must have a pre-licensure visit and annual unannounced visits.
- Licensors inspecting CCDF providers must be qualified, and ratio of inspectors to providers should be sufficient to conduct effective inspections.
- Inspection reports for licensed providers must be posted, regardless of CCDF participation.

Lead Agencies determine all other child care licensing standards.



CCDF Health and Safety Requirements

Lead Agencies must establish health and safety standards and trainings in the following topics:

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)	7. Emergency preparedness and response planning
2. SIDS prevention and use of safe sleep practices	8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants
3. Administration of medication	9. Transportation (if applicable)
4. Prevention/response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions	10. Pediatric first-aid and CPR
5. Building and physical premises safety	11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect
6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment	12. Child development, including the major domains (only pre-service/orientation training on this topic is required)



CCDF Health and Safety Flexibilities

Topic	CCDF Requirement	Lead Agency Flexibility
Health and Safety Topical Standards	Lead Agencies must have standards on the 11 health and safety topics.	Lead Agencies may require additional standards to support health and safety.
Pre-Service and Orientation Training Timing	All staff must complete training on 11 health and safety topics and child development within 3 months.	Lead Agencies may require additional training topics to support health and safety. Lead Agencies determine which trainings must be completed prior to caring for children unsupervised.
Ongoing Training	Lead Agencies must establish minimum hours of annual training.	Lead Agencies determine the topics and minimum hours for ongoing training.
Group Size Limits and Ratios	Lead Agencies must have group size limits and child-to-staff ratios for each age group.	Lead Agencies decide actual group size limits and child-to-staff ratios.
In-Home Providers	In-home providers must meet all health and safety standards.	Lead Agencies can have an alternative approach to monitoring in-home providers.

Lead Agencies may exempt relative providers, as defined by CCDF, from some or all of the CCDF health and safety requirements.



Flexibility in Licensing Applicability

Can Lead Agencies exempt certain providers from state/territory licensing requirements?

Yes, Lead Agencies can exempt certain providers from state/territory licensing requirements. However, they must explain in their CCDF Plan why these exemptions won't harm the health, safety, or development of children.



Applicability of Health and Safety Standards

Do CCDF health and safety requirements apply to license-exempt CCDF providers?

Yes, CCDF health and safety requirements apply to all child care providers participating in CCDF, including those the Lead Agency has exempted from licensing requirements.

Lead Agencies may exempt providers only caring for children they are related to, as defined by CCDF, from some or all of the CCDF health and safety requirements.



Flexibility in Ratio and Group Size Standards

Do Lead Agencies have the flexibility to set child-to-staff ratio and group size requirements for child care?

Yes, Lead Agencies get to decide their own child-to-staff ratios and group size rules for child care. They just have to include those standards in their CCDF Plan.

CCDF does not set specific limits—though it can offer guidance, it's up to each Lead Agency to make the final call.



Flexibility in Monitoring Standards

Are monitoring requirements the same for care provided in the child's home?

No, Lead Agencies may propose an alternative process for monitoring care provided in the child's home.

Because an in-home setting is different from other child care settings, Lead Agencies can choose to focus on key health and safety issues—such as background checks and health and safety training. Lead Agencies can then pick and choose what in-home providers will be monitored on.

In-home providers must still be monitored at least once a year.



Flexibility in Ongoing Training Standards

Is there a set number of training hours for CCDF providers?

- No. Lead Agencies get to decide how many training hours are needed each year and include that in their CCDF Plan.

Do staff need to repeat health and safety training every year, or is it one-and-done?

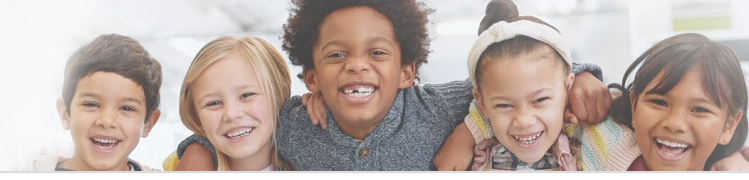
- Ongoing training is required to keep staff up to date and children safe, but Lead Agencies have the flexibility to decide which topics need to be repeated and how often. For example, Lead Agencies can follow established timelines for topics like CPR, which usually renews every 2 years.

What does “maintains and updates” mean for ongoing health and safety training?

- Lead Agencies have the flexibility to define “maintaining” and “updating” for the purposes of their CCDF requirements, meaning they can decide which health and safety topics need to be refreshed and how often.

If a health and safety training is valid for more than 1 year, can it be counted toward training requirements in multiple years?

- Yes. Lead Agencies have the flexibility to recognize certifications like medication administration or CPR for as long as they’re valid.



Flexible Uses of CCDF Quality Funds

Training and
professional
development

Early learning and
development guidelines

Tiered quality rating and
improvement system

Efforts to improve the
supply and quality of
child care for infants and
toddlers

Child care resource and
referral system

Facilitation of
compliance with
licensing and health and
safety requirements

Evaluation and
assessment of the
quality and effectiveness
of child care programs

Support for
accreditation

Additional high-quality
program standards (i.e.
nutrition, physical
activity)

Other activities to
improve the quality of
child care services



Flexibility in Quality Activities

Lead Agencies can use quality funds to partner with families and providers who have experienced the child care system to help shape better policies.

Funding can be used for:

- Planning and gathering feedback from families
- Paying participants for their time and any costs such as transportation or child care
- Hiring parents, child care providers, or child care staff to be subject matter experts in developing or refining policies and procedures



State Highlights

Michigan

- Provider feedback
- Pre-service training (30 days, 90 days)
- Ongoing training hours by staff title
- New provider type and required training
- Group size





**Michigan Department of Lifelong
Education, Advancement, and Potential**

Child Care Licensing Rule Revision Project

STAM - July 2025

Goal and Purpose of the Project

Goal - ensure that the rules are clear, reasonable, necessary, comprehensive, comply with federal requirements, reflect the needs of the industry, and meet the health, welfare and safety standards for the children.

Purpose - revise two sets of rules, the licensed child care centers and licensed child care homes. We would also revise the technical assistance manuals for each rule set.

Feedback

- 63 listening sessions with stakeholders
- 582 child care providers, community partners and state partners provided feedback during in person and virtual sessions
- 1,294 responses to written survey opportunities
- Reviewed data about common rule violations and what support providers needed
- Ad Hoc Committee meetings
- Ad Hoc Committee public comment opportunities
- Public hearings

Flexibility

Ease of burden for providers

Used plain language when possible

Reorganized rule set

Removed duplicity of rules

Revised Technical Assistance Manual to be plain language, 6th grade reading level

Removed requirement for tuberculosis (TB) testing

Training

Orientation training

Professional development

Flexibility

Created Two New Provider Types

Small Capacity Child Care Centers

- Outdoor play area
- Capacity
- Ratio/Group Size

Outdoor Nature-Based (ONB) Child Care Centers

- Rules specific to ONB provide flexibility of program type– Outdoor Benefit-Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan
- Rules require specific training to support health and safety of children

Flexibility: Group Size and Ratios

Group Size Changes for PreK and School-Age

Age Children	2019 Rules	2025 Rules
PreK 30 months – 3 years	16	24
PreK 3 y to 4 years	30	30
PreK 4 years to school-age	36	40
School-age	36	54

Naptime Ratio

- Staffing flexibility
- Support workforce

Flexibility: Staffing

Program Administrator, Site Administrator, Lead Teacher

Expanded qualifications to include more educational focuses in addition to the importance of experience

Added flexibility for leadership, allowing for program administrators to oversee more than one site

Highlighted and professionalized staff caring for children by the new title, *Lead Teacher*

Family and Group Homes



Adding flexibility to
ratio



Expanding
definitions of staff



Streamlining rules



Reorganizing
federally required
training rules



Clarifying federally
required health and
safety requirements

Questions?





Small Group Activity

**Flexibility in Action:
Share, Shape, Shine!**

I Learned... Share one new insight or flexibility you didn't know before.

I Will... Describe how you or your agency could apply this flexibility or another flexibility back home.

We Did/We Could... Share a success story or imagine a bold use of a flexibility in your state or territory.



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Flexibility in Action: Share, Shape, Shine!

Separate into groups so you are not with a coworker.

Pick a reporter to report out to the larger group.

Using at least one post-note per prompt, each person will:

- Write down responses to each of the three prompts.
- Share responses with the group.
- Place the responses on the chart paper.

Next, the group selects one flexibility that may be new to some of the group members and one story or idea from the conversation to present to the larger group.

Prompts:

1. **I Learned...** Share one new insight or flexibility you didn't know before.
2. **I Will...** Describe how you or your agency could apply this flexibility or another flexibility back home.
3. **We Did/We Could...** Share a success story or imagine a bold use of a flexibility in your state or territory.



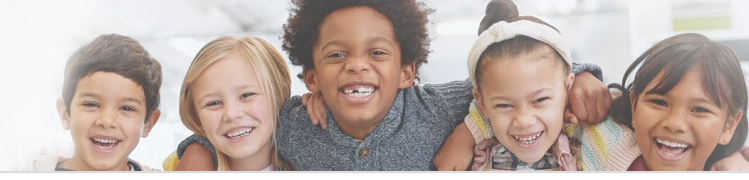


Questions?



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Technical Assistance Is Available

Please use this QR code or corresponding web link
to request individualized technical assistance.





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