

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families

Child Care Center and School Age Program Regulations for Licensure

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192 – DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

40 – Licensing

05 - Childcare

01 – Child Care Center and School Age Program Regulations for Licensure

1.1 Purpose

These regulations contain the licensing requirements for center-based child care programs licensed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families. The primary purpose of licensing a child care program is to safeguard the well-being of the children served. Granting a license means there is clear evidence that the building and grounds are safe, staff are appropriately trained and the program reflects an understanding of the healthy growth and development of children. The license provides assurance to families and the community that the children are cared for in a safe, healthy environment with appropriate activities, schedules, food, materials and equipment, and that staff encourage and support the children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth.

1.2 Authority

These regulations are promulgated pursuant to RIGL §42-72, RIGL §42-72-5, §42-72.1, §40-13.2, §23-28.15, and §31.22.1.

1.3 Application

The terms and provisions of these regulations shall be liberally construed to permit the Department to effectuate the purposes of state law, goals and policies.

1.4 Severability

If any provision of these regulations or application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the validity of the remainder of the regulations shall not be affected thereby.

1.5 Definitions

A. Ages

1. Infant - a child between the ages of 6 weeks and 18 months.
2. Younger Infant - a child between the ages of 6 weeks to 12 months.
3. Older Infant - a child between the ages of 12 months to 18 months.

4. Toddler - a child between the ages of 18 months and 36 months.
5. Younger Toddler - a child between the ages of 18 months to 27 months.
6. Older Toddler - a child between the ages of 27 months to 36 months.
7. Preschool - a child between 3 and 5 years of age.
8. Preschool 3 - a child 3 years of age.
9. Preschool 4 - a child 4 years of age.
10. Preschool 5-6 - a child between the ages of 5 and 6 years old, and not yet in kindergarten.
11. School Age - a child at least 5 years of age, and in kindergarten, but not more than 16 years of age.
12. School Age K-G3 - a child at least 5 years of age, and in kindergarten, but not more than third grade.
13. School Age G4-G6 - a child in fourth, fifth, or sixth grade.
14. School Age G7+ - a child in seventh grade or above, but not older than 16 years of age.

B. Licensing

1. Capacity - the maximum number of children permitted to be in a licensed child care program at any one time.
2. Department - the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, also referred to as DCYF.
3. Licensing Unit - the division within DCYF responsible for issuing Child Care Licenses.
4. Usable Floor Space - the term used to describe space, which is available for use by children for activities throughout the day. Only usable floor space will be factored into the measurement of classroom and activity rooms.
5. Variance - Administrative decision that allows a child care provider to meet a standard for licensure in a manner other than that specified in the regulations. A variance is granted on a case-by-case basis only when the purpose of the licensing standard is achieved and the safety of the child is maintained.
6. Waiver - an administrative decision that allows a child care provider to be exempted from a standard for licensure. A waiver is granted on a case-by-case.

1.6 Licensing Provisions

A. Interest

1. Any person, firm, corporation, association or agency interested in opening a child care program for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and/or School Age children contacts the Department of Children, Youth and Families' (hereinafter, the Department) licensing unit.

B. Application

1. Proposed programs submit a separate application for each program, which includes all supporting documentation and fee payments, and is reviewed by the Department for licensing determination.

C. Initial Licensure

1. Upon successful completion of the application process and issuance of a time-limited Provisional License, the licensee must develop an operational program in order to meet the needs of the children served and demonstrate full compliance with these regulations.
2. To obtain and maintain a Regular License, the program must demonstrate full compliance with the regulations at all times.
3. If at any time, the program does not comply with these regulations, a Probationary License may be issued, and a Plan of Corrective Action may be required.
4. The program is responsible for adhering to the child care license which indicates the:
 - a. physical location of the program;
 - b. dates of validity;
 - c. maximum number of children; and
 - d. age groups to be served in the program.
5. The licensed program is responsible for compliance with the regulations at all times of the year, including the school year, summer and vacation programs.
6. The current license must be posted in a conspicuous place in the program.
7. If there are any inaccuracies on the printed license, the licensee is responsible to contact the Department to rectify the error.

8. The license is not transferable, and is granted only to the designated licensee and is limited to the stated location, which can occupy no more than one building.
9. If a program operates in multiple areas of a building that is also used for a purpose other than child care the program may be subject to multiple licenses.
10. When the operation of a child care program is discontinued, the licensee provides the Department's licensing unit with written notification at least 30 days prior to closure.

D. Renewal Licensure

1. The Department provides access to a renewal application that must be submitted with all supporting documentation and fee payment at least sixty days prior to the expiration of the existing child care license.

E. Monitoring and Enforcement

1. The license entitles the Director of the Department or designee and the Office of the Child Advocate or designee:
 - a. the right of entrance;
 - b. the privilege to inspect and access all files in order to ascertain compliance with these regulations; and
 - c. the right to investigate complaints.

F. Denial, Revocation or Suspension of License

1. A license is denied, suspended, or revoked for:
 - a. failing to comply with these regulations;
 - b. providing falsified or misleading statements and/or documentation to the Department; and/or
 - c. making concerted efforts to deceive the Department.
2. If at any time, under any license status, the Department finds that the health, safety or welfare of children, or the public, is in jeopardy a summary suspension of license may be ordered.
3. When a licensee violates the terms of the license the Department may pursue administrative, civil or criminal remedies according to applicable RI general laws.

G. Variances and Waivers

1. A licensee may apply, in writing, for a variance or waiver to a regulation provided that the variance or waiver in no way jeopardizes the health, safety or well-being of the children.
2. A variance or waiver is not valid until the licensee receives written approval from the licensing Administrator or designee.
3. The conditions of the variance or waiver may not change without written approval from the licensing Administrator or designee.
4. If the variance or waiver has a time-limit, at the end of the variance or waiver term, the licensee must demonstrate compliance with all of these regulations.
5. The Department may issue a waiver or variance to specific requirements in these regulations for programs with special education approval from the RI Department of Education (RIDE), and programs certified through the RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH).

H. Appeals and Hearings

1. Any applicant for licensure or license holder may appeal any action or decision of a Departmental staff, supervisor or Administrator that is adverse to the person's status as an applicant or license holder.

1.7 Physical Facilities

A. Required Inspections and Certifications

1. The following inspections or certifications must be completed prior to receiving an initial license:
 - a. A building inspection conducted by a certified building inspector, in which a Certificate of Occupancy is submitted;
 - b. A compliant fire inspection conducted by the State Fire Marshal's office. Programs approved by the RI Department of Education's Basic Education Program may obtain the required fire inspection from a local fire inspector;
 - c. Lead Safe or Lead Free Certificate;
 - d. Asbestos-Safe Certificate;
 - e. Radon inspection, with a passing Radon Test Result;
 - f. Water potability (as applicable for programs with well-water, conducted no more than three months prior to initial licensing);

- g. Food Safety inspections (for programs that prepare and serve meals); and
 - h. Public pool license (as applicable).
2. The following inspections or certifications must be updated and/or re-submitted to maintain licensure:
- a. An annual compliant fire inspection conducted by the State Fire Marshal's office. Programs approved by the RI Department of Education's Basic Education Program may obtain the required fire inspection from a local fire inspector;
 - b. Annual Lead Safe Certificate conducted by a certified lead inspector (programs that hold a Lead-Free certificate may submit this annually without repeated lead inspections);
 - c. Annual Asbestos-Safe certificate (once a program holds this certificate, it can be re-submitted without repeated asbestos inspections);
 - d. Radon inspection, with a passing Radon Test Result (conducted every three years by a Certified Radon Inspector);
 - e. Water potability (as applicable for programs with well-water, conducted no more than three months prior to renewal);
 - f. Food Safety inspections (for programs that prepare and serve meals); and
 - g. Public pool license (as applicable).

B. Construction

- 1. The construction of new buildings or outdoor space or the renovation/modification of existing buildings or outdoor space requires approval by the Department prior to the start of construction.

C. Structural Requirements and Mechanical Systems

- 1. Each room must be ventilated via a ventilation system or opened door or window.
- 2. There must be a minimum of 300 cubic feet of air space for each child.
- 3. Each classroom, in an existing program, has natural light through a window, windowed door, or skylight (either directly into the classroom or from a shared space), enough to provide supervision of the entire classroom without the use of artificial lighting.

4. Each classroom, in a program licensed subsequent to the date of these regulations, has natural light through a wall-level window, directly within each classroom space, enough to provide supervision of the entire classroom without the use of artificial lighting.
5. Each activity space, in a program licensed subsequent to the date of these regulations, has natural light through a window, windowed door, or skylight (either directly into the classroom or from a shared space), enough to provide supervision of the entire classroom without the use of artificial lighting.
6. Each classroom and activity space has artificial lighting that is intact and in good working order.
7. Programs that offer night time care must have back up emergency lighting systems.
8. The temperature in all classrooms and other spaces used by children is maintained within a range of 65°F - 74°F.
9. Portable space heaters are prohibited.
10. All classroom and program exits/egresses are clearly identified and unobstructed.
11. Any unfamiliar individual requesting entry into the program must provide photo identification prior to admittance.
12. All entrances to the program are kept locked at all times with mechanisms in place for monitoring entry.
13. If at any time an entrance to the program is unlocked (e.g. drop off/pick up, service deliveries), a designated staff person is required to directly monitor all entry/exits from the program, and is then responsible for resecuring the entrance.
14. All hand-washing sinks have both cold and warm running water set to at least 60°F and not to exceed 120°F.
15. There is a telephone (landline or cellular) solely designated for program and business use located within the program at all times and readily available for use in case of an emergency.
16. Facilities used by children are above grade, as defined by the International Building Code.
17. All exterior windows that can open are securely screened.

D. Toileting and Diapering Facilities

1. Programs serving Infants and/or Toddlers have one diaper changing area with one nearby sink for each group of 20 children.
2. Programs serving Toddlers old have one toilet and one sink for each group of 20 children.
3. Programs serving Preschool have one toilet and one sink for each group of 10 children.
4. Bathroom facilities used by Infant, Toddler, and Preschooler children are located on the same level as their respective classrooms.
5. Programs serving School Age children must have one toilet and one sink for each group of 20 children.
6. School Age programs have separate bathroom facilities for both boys and girls that provide privacy for children and allow for respectful supervision by staff.
7. School Age programs serving under 20 children may request Department approval for the use of one fully enclosed unisex bathroom.
8. During the operation of the School Age program, School Age bathrooms are for the exclusive use of School Age children.
9. In existing School Age programs, School Age bathrooms located in or near Toddler or Preschool bathroom facilities must be equipped with a privacy stall for the exclusive use of School Age children.
10. In any School Age program, licensed subsequent to the date of these regulations, the bathroom facilities must be separate and apart from the Toddler or Preschool facilities.
11. There are toilet facilities in the same building for exclusive use by staff and other adults.

E. Food Preparation

1. There must be an area for food preparation that is sanitized prior to use for food handling, preparation and distribution of snacks.
2. If meals are prepared and served at the program, there is a kitchen equipped for food preparation.
3. If refrigeration is used, temperatures are maintained at 41°F or lower for refrigerator and 0°F or lower for freezer.
4. There is sufficient storage for food and supplies.
5. A dishwasher with a sanitizing option must be used for re-usable tableware utilized by children.

F. Classroom and Activity Room Requirements

1. Classrooms, with the exception of those used solely for School Age children, are defined at minimum, by dividers that are at least four feet high and are securely fastened to the floor, wall or other means that ensures stability.
2. Movement of classroom dividers requires permission from the Department, and may result in the re-measurement of space.
3. Classrooms used by Preschool or School Age children must be on the first or second floor.
4. Each Preschool or School Age classroom must maintain a minimum of 35 square feet of usable floor space for each child.
5. Preschool and School Age children may use additional activity rooms located on the first or second floor.
6. Stairways used by Preschool and/or School Age children have a second handrail no higher than 28 inches from the stair tread.
7. Any classroom used by Infants and/or Toddlers, in an existing program, must have access to the outdoors without the use of stairs or elevators.
8. Any classroom used by Infants and/or Toddlers, in a program or classroom licensed subsequent to the date of these regulations, must have direct access from the classroom to the outdoors without the use of stairs or elevators.
9. Each Infant and/or Toddler classroom must maintain a minimum of 45 square feet of usable floor space for each child.
10. Infant and/or Toddler children may only use additional activity located on the same level as the Infant and/or Toddler classrooms.
11. Programs are required to designate space in the facility for:
 - a. administrative and clerical functions;
 - b. storage of equipment and materials;
 - c. storage of food; and
 - d. a utility room, separate from the kitchen, with hot and cold water and storage space for cleaning equipment and supplies.

G. Outdoor Requirements

1. Each program has an outdoor play area:

- a. with at least 75 square feet of usable outdoor space per child for at least 50% of the licensed capacity of the program; or
 - b. with at least 75 square feet of usable outdoor space per child, as designated by a schedule of use, subject to approval by the Department.
2. If the licensed facility does not have access to usable outdoor space the program must submit a plan for outdoor play, subject to approval by the Department.
3. The outdoor play area is required to be surrounded by a permanent structure. If a fence is used, it must be:
 - a. at least four feet in height when measured from the ground;
 - b. erected on ground that is reasonably level, well-drained; and
 - c. free from hazards.
4. If the outdoor play space has a gate, it is properly secured with a functional locking mechanism.
5. All outdoor equipment and safety surfacing is maintained and in good repair, in accordance with United States Consumer Product Safety Commission Standards.
6. The program maintains safety surfacing, in accordance with national standards, under any equipment that requires children's feet to leave the ground.
7. Full-size trampolines are prohibited.
8. Programs approved by the RI Department of Education's Basic Education Program are required to follow those regulations for outdoor space.
9. Programs with a pool must comply with the Department of Health Rules and Regulations for Licensing Swimming and Wading Pools, Hot Tubs, and Spas.
 - a. The pool license must be posted in a visible area.
 - b. If a program's pool has been deemed by the Department of Health as a status of "voluntary close" it is not permitted for children's use, until such time that the Department of Health changes the status.
 - c. Programs conduct and log the results of water testing before every day that the pool is used, and not less than one time weekly, during the times of year that the pool is open for use.

H. Overall Facility Safety

1. Programs are wholly responsible for ensuring that all parts of the licensed facility are maintained in a way that ensures health and safety of children and staff, at all times.
2. In any event where weather impairs safety of the facility, the program ensures safe passage in and out of the program, and ensures that all structural and mechanical systems are fully functional.

1.8 Health, Safety, and Nutrition

A. Medical Requirements

1. Child care programs adopt policies and procedures consistent with the RI Department of Health's Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Immunization and Communicable Disease in Preschool, School, Colleges or Universities.
 - a. Programs are not required to maintain immunization records for children enrolled in a school approved by the RI Department of Education's Basic Education Program.
2. The parent/guardian submits evidence of an annual health examination, signed by the child's primary care provider, which includes information regarding any condition or limitation that may affect the child's general health or participation in the program.

B. Communicable Disease

1. A child or staff member suffering from a communicable disease follows timelines of absence prior to returning to the program as specified in the RI Department of Health, Division of Disease Prevention and Control, Office of Communicable Disease, Guidelines for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control.
2. In the event a child or staff member suffers from a communicable disease, the program provides written notice to inform all parents/guardians to which communicable disease the child(ren) may have been exposed, without providing any identifying information regarding the source of the communicable disease.
3. In all matters of exclusion and readmission of children for reasons of illness, the decision of the Program Administrator, in consultation with a licensed physician, applies.

C. Medication Administration

1. Medications, including over-the-counter, are not administered to a child without written parental/guardian authorization.
2. Prescribed medication is not administered to a child without a written order from a licensed physician (which may include the label on the medication)

indicating that the medicine is for a specified child. The medication must be in the original container.

- a. The written order includes the name of the child, the name of the medication, circumstances under which it may be administered, dosage and frequency of administration.
 3. The program Administrator or designee dispenses all medications.
 4. A daily log is maintained of every medication administered. This record includes the:
 - a. child's name;
 - b. name and dosage of medication administered;
 - c. date and time administered;
 - d. name and signature of the person who administered the medication; and
 - e. name of the licensed physician prescribing the medication.
 5. The medication log is transported with the child to the emergency treatment facility in the event of an emergency.
 6. The first dose of a medication must be administered by the parent/guardian.
 7. Medications are stored:
 - a. in clearly labeled original containers;
 - b. in spaces secured with child safety locks that are separate from any items that attract children; and
 - c. in a way that does not contaminate play surfaces or food preparation areas.
- D. Special Health Care Needs
1. If there are children in the program who have special health care needs, specific health procedures are delivered by a licensed/certified health professional or a staff person who has been trained to appropriately carry out such procedures.
 2. Necessary accommodations are made for children with special needs to ensure participation in all experiences, activities, and opportunities, including active play.
- E. Child Abuse and Neglect

1. Any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect is reported to the Department of Children, Youth and Families' Child Protective Services hotline (1-800-RI-CHILD) within 24 hours in accordance with state law and Department policy.
2. The program reports to the Department's licensing unit immediately after reporting to the CPS hotline.

F. Prohibited Practices

1. Corporal punishment and restraint is strictly prohibited. Corporal punishment includes:
 - a. physically restraining a child;
 - b. hitting, grabbing, pushing, pulling, or choking a child;
 - c. subjecting a child to physical, cruel, severe, or unusual punishment.
2. Other practices that are strictly prohibited include, but may not be limited to:
 - a. Punishing children for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
 - b. Restraining children in a high chair/bucket seat for reasons other than feeding/eating.
 - c. Subjecting children to humiliation, threats, verbal abuse, yelling, or derogatory remarks.
 - d. Ignoring or neglecting children.
 - e. Depriving children of meals, snacks, physical activity, or outdoor play as a reward or behavior consequence unless if specifically stated in a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
 - f. Smoking and the use of tobacco products in the buildings or outdoor play areas or on program grounds within 25 feet of buildings.
 - g. Smoking in any vehicle used by the program for transporting children.
 - h. Using illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol anywhere in the program or on program grounds.
 - i. Being under the influence of any illegal drugs or alcohol while on program grounds.

- j. Using or possessing guns or weapons of any kind on program grounds.

G. Environmental Health

1. The facility, equipment, and materials are clean, free of hazards, and kept in good repair.
2. The program stocks a sufficient supply of items required to maintain personal hygiene for children and staff.
3. Any product used for cleaning, sanitizing and/or disinfecting is approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and is used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
4. All preventive maintenance performed within the program must be performed at times when children are not in the area of the equipment or systems being serviced. Tools, supplies, materials, parts, or debris must not be left at the job site, unless they are secured and stored away from children.
5. Garbage receptacles are lined and garbage is removed from the program daily.
6. Any rodent and insect infestation is promptly treated. Insecticides and rodenticides are approved by the RI Department of Health, and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions
7. The program posts and follows a regular cleaning and sanitation schedule, including provisions for deep cleaning.
8. Tables used for eating are sanitized before and after meals and snacks.
9. Sensory water tables or other receptacles used for water play are emptied and sanitized daily.
10. Reusable sponges and dish clothes are not used for cleaning and sanitizing.
11. The program utilizes a dishwasher with a sanitizing option to wash all reusable tableware.
12. Disposable cups are required if a program utilizes a water fountain. Any use of water fountains outside of the licensed program is prohibited.
13. Toxic substances and any other items of potential danger to children are clearly labeled and are secured by a child safety lock.

H. Hygiene

1. Staff wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water as needed and:
 - a. after each diaper change;
 - b. after personal toileting;
 - c. after assisting a child with toileting;
 - d. after wiping a runny nose;
 - e. before and after using water, sand, or other sensory tables; and
 - f. before any food preparation or service.
 2. Staff ensure that children wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water as needed and:
 - a. after each toileting;
 - b. before each meal or snack;
 - c. after wiping or blowing their nose;
 - d. before and after using water, sand, or other sensory tables; and
 - e. upon entry from the outdoors.
 3. Single use cloths or towelettes are permitted in Infant/Toddler classrooms for washing children's faces and hands before and after eating.
 4. Adult hand-washing sinks are not to be used for:
 - a. preparing food;
 - b. washing dishes, toys, or other classroom materials; or
 - c. use by children.
 5. Drinking water is never obtained from any bathroom facility.
- I. Pets and Animals
1. Parents/Guardians are notified in advance of any pets or animals maintained at or visiting the program.
 2. All pets and animals maintained at or visiting the program are cared for in a clean, safe and sanitary manner.
 3. All pets and animals maintained at or visiting the program are kept in accordance with state and local requirements, including all applicable vaccinations.

4. Children are protected from pets that are potentially dangerous to their health or safety.

J. Illness and Injury

1. A daily health check is conducted on each child as soon as possible after the child arrives at the program.
2. If a child presents with symptoms of concern, staff:
 - a. document the findings;
 - b. determine the needs of the child and make accommodations as necessary; and
 - c. notify the parent/guardian, as necessary.
3. If a child becomes ill while at the program:
 - a. A cot is available for an ill child to rest.
 - b. When in use, the cot must be placed in a supervised area, away from other children.
 - c. Furniture and materials touched by an ill child are disinfected after use.
4. A first aid kit is available in each classroom and outdoor play areas.
 - a. The first aid kit is restocked after each use.
5. are documented on an injury report.
 - a. A parent/guardian must sign the written injury report.
 - b. Parent/guardians are notified of injuries on the same day of the injury.
 - c. A copy of this report is placed in the child's file.
 - d. The injury, first aid and parent/guardian communication is recorded in the program's daily health log.
6. A choke-saving poster, that outlines the Heimlich Maneuver, is prominently displayed in any area where children eat.

K. Equipment and Furniture

1. Program furniture must be clean, durable, maintained in good repair and free of hazards.

2. The program maintains an adequate supply of clean diapers, bed linens and clothing changes.
3. The program has a choke prevention gauge readily available.
4. Bucket seats and high chairs are used for feeding and are never used during activity time or as a form of restraint.
5. All cribs and cots are washed and sanitized before use by another child.
6. All bedding used on cots or cribs is laundered weekly.
7. All bedding used on cots must be removed in between uses and safely stored in individual plastic bags, or comparable means, to prevent contamination.
8. A crib or cot is available for each resting child.
9. Children may use a cot at 12 months of age.
10. There is one evacuation crib equipped with wheels for every five children under 2 years of age.
11. Evacuation cribs are to remain empty of materials and accessible for use in case of an emergency.
 - a. In the event of an emergency, the evacuation cribs are used to safely remove children from the facility.
 - b. Evacuation cribs may be utilized for sleeping children at naptime.
12. There is at least two feet of space between each cot and/or crib with a resting child during nap/rest time.
13. The program maintains proof on-site that every crib meets the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission Standards.
14. Prohibited equipment and furniture includes:
 - a. Toilet training chairs;
 - b. Mobile-walkers, baby corrals, and play-yards;
 - c. Mats for the use of rest; and
 - d. Pack-n-plays, playpens, and other portable cribs.

L. Emergency/Disaster Plans and Procedures

1. The program develops and implements an individualized, written plan to prepare for and respond to potential emergency/disaster situations.

2. The emergency and disaster plan is appropriate to support the needs of all children in the program and must be approved by the Department.
3. In all situations where an emergency or suspected emergency occurs the program follows their defined procedures.
4. An individualized graphic evacuation plan identifying alternative escape routes is posted in each classroom.
5. All required emergency phone numbers are posted in a conspicuous place adjacent to the telephone.
6. The program Administrator or designee conducts regular safety drills.
 - a. Twelve fire drills are conducted every 12 months, with no more than three drills delayed for weather.
 - b. Four shelter-in-place drills are conducted every 12 months.
 - c. Both obstructed and unobstructed drills are conducted.
 - d. A record of all safety drills is maintained.
 - e. Programs with night time care conduct an additional set of safety drills during the night time hours of operation.

M. Nutrition

1. The program must provide morning and afternoon snacks. Children are provided the opportunity to eat at intervals not to exceed three hours.
2. Menus for meals and snacks are planned on a five-week rotating basis and are posted weekly.
3. The program gives parents/guardians written nutrition guidelines at the time of enrollment.
4. A supply of food that meets the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program nutritional standards is kept at the program for:
 - a. meals (if applicable) and snacks;
 - b. when a parent/guardian does not provide a sufficient quantity of food; and
 - c. additional servings requested by children.
5. On special occasions, food and beverages (not to include soda or other caffeinated drinks) that do not meet nutritional requirements may be served in addition to required meals and snacks.

6. Children are never forced to eat.
7. Food is not used as a reward or other incentive or withheld as a punishment.
 - a. Exceptions may only be made if specifically stated in a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
8. Children between one and two years of age are served whole milk when not served breast milk or formula.
9. Children two years of age and older are served skim or one percent milk.
10. If a program serves juice, it must be 100% fruit juice. Younger Infants are never served juice.
11. The program does not serve drinks with caffeine and/or sweetened artificially or with sugar, including soda and flavored milk.
12. Drinking water is readily available throughout the day, especially before, during and after outdoor play.
13. Drinking water supplies are located in or near classrooms and activity rooms.

N. Food Allergies

1. For each child with food allergies or special nutritional needs, the program requests that the parent/guardian obtains a care plan from the child's health care provider.
2. The program protects children with food allergies from contact with the allergen.
3. The program asks parent/guardian of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information within the program about that child's food allergy.
 - a. If consent is given, that information is posted in the food preparation area and in the areas of the program the child uses.
 - b. If consent for posting is not provided, then this information is shared verbally with all relevant staff, including substitutes.

1.9 Routine Care of Children

A. Feeding and Eating

1. Eating and feeding routines meet the individual needs of children in the program.

2. Staff do not force children to eat.
3. A feeding plan is established and followed for each Infant and Toddler prior to admission.
4. Infants who are not ready for self-feeding are held and fed by an individual staff member on a one-to-one basis.
5. Bottles are never propped up at any time or placed in a crib with a child.
6. A heating unit for warming bottles and food is readily accessible to staff. Microwaves are not used for heating bottles and food items.
7. Only BPA free plastic or glass bottles are used.
8. Bottles provided by parents are labeled with dates and child's name.
9. If the program provides bottles and reusable nipples for community use, they are washed and sanitized in the dishwasher or boiled for at least five minutes prior to use.
10. The program prepares formula that is mixed and served according to manufacturer's instructions.
11. All breast milk or formula is clearly labeled with the child's name and date of preparation.
12. Prepared formula or breast milk is used immediately or stored in the refrigerator.
13. Un-served prepared formula or breast milk is returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the day.
14. Staff discard any leftover food that remains in containers after feeding. Any formula or breast milk remaining in a bottle after feeding is discarded.

B. Diapering and Toileting

1. Diapering and Toileting routines meet the individual needs of children in the program.
2. Staff do not force children to use the bathroom.
3. Toilet training conforms to an individual plan based on each child's readiness and is carried out in conjunction with the parent/guardian.
4. Routine attempts to toilet train are made only when a child demonstrates readiness.
5. Children are changed and diapered regularly and are washed and dried with single use baby wipes.

6. No child is left unattended during diapering.
7. The diaper-changing surface is cleaned and sanitized after each use with a disposable towel, EPA registered disinfectant, or disinfectant solution that is prepared daily.
8. Staff wash their hands thoroughly with liquid soap and warm running water after each diaper change, even if disposable gloves are used.
9. All soiled diapers are removed from the building daily.
10. If disposable diapers are used, they are placed in a covered receptacle that is:
 - a. lined with a plastic bag;
 - b. kept away from the children's activity and food service areas;
 - c. emptied as necessary to eliminate odors; and
 - d. cleaned and disinfected daily.
11. If cloth diapers are used, they are:
 - a. not rinsed or emptied at the child care program;
 - b. completely wrapped in a non-permeable material;
 - c. kept away from the children's activity and food service areas; and
 - d. given directly to the parent/guardian upon discharge of the child.

C. Sleeping

1. Sleeping routines meet the individual needs of children in the program.
2. Staff do not force children to sleep or stay awake.
3. There is a sleep plan appropriate to the needs of each child.
4. Infants sleep in a safe sleep environment consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics Safe Sleep Guidelines.
5. An Infant is placed on his/her back while sleeping unless the Infant's health care provider has completed a signed waiver indicating that the child requires an alternate sleeping arrangement.
6. Infants must sleep in a crib approved by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission Standards, equipped with a firm crib mattress and a tight fitting sheet.
 - a. Older Infants may sleep on a cot, at the discretion of the program.

7. Lighting must allow for staff to view the color of the Infant's skin and to check for breathing.
8. Infants cannot sleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, Infant seat, swing, jumping chair, highchair, or in comparable equipment/furniture.
9. If an Infant arrives at the facility asleep in a car safety seat, or falls asleep in comparable equipment, the Infant is immediately placed in a safe sleep environment.
10. Monitors or positioning devices are not used unless required by the child's health care provider.
11. There are no restraining devices of any type, including swaddles, used unless prescribed by a physician or other appropriately licensed/certified professional.
12. No items are placed in the crib with an Infant except for a pacifier.
13. A pacifier clip is not permitted for use in a crib.
14. No additional items are placed in or above the crib.
13. Cribs are only used for rest or sleep.

1.10 Enrollment and Staffing

A. Enrollment Age

1. For admittance into an Infant program, a child is at least 6 weeks of age.
2. For admittance into a Toddler program, a child is at least 18 months of age.
3. For admittance into a Preschool program, a child is at least 3 years of age.
4. For admittance into a School Age program, a child is at least five years of age and in kindergarten.
5. Programs do not place any child above or below stipulated age requirements unless written exception is granted by the Department.
6. The program does not enroll children or allow attendance of children who are outside of the ages for which the program is licensed.
7. Under no circumstances is a child in care for over 24 consecutive hours.

B. Staff/Child Ratio, Group Size, and Age Integration

1. Programs must group children according to the following staff/child ratios and maximum number of children:

Age Group	Age	Maximum Staff/Child Ratios	Maximum Group Size
Younger Infants	6 weeks – 12 months	1 : 4	8
Older Infants	12 – 18 months	1 : 4	8
Younger Toddlers	18 – 27 months	1 : 6	12
Older Toddlers	27 – 36 months	1 : 7	14
Preschool 3	3 years old	1 : 9	18
Preschool 4	4 years old	1 : 10	20
Preschool 5-6	5-6 years old AND not in kindergarten	1 : 12	24
School Age K-G3	At least 5 years old AND in kindergarten	1 : 13	26
School Age G4-G6	Grades 4 – 6	1 : 13	26
School Age G7+	Grades 7 and above, up to age 16	1 : 13	26

2. Programs may integrate children of different ages in any combination of the following options:

Option	Allowable Age Group Combinations
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger Infants • Older Infants • Younger Toddlers • Older Toddlers
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older Toddlers • Preschool 3
#3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool 3 • Preschool 4 • Preschool 5
#4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Age K-G3 • School Age G4-G6
#5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Age G4-G6 • School Age G7+

3. School Age children may never be combined with any other age groups younger than School Age.
4. If one of the above age group combinations takes place in any classroom, programs are required to meet the regulations required for the youngest age child in the grouping.
5. Programs may combine groups of children within the allowable age combinations, while maintaining applicable staff ratios, for activities which include:
 - a. outdoor play;
 - b. meals; and
 - c. rest/sleep.
6. During rest time for Toddler or Preschool groups, there can be one staff member per group of napping/resting children.
7. There are no exceptions to ratio for Infants.
8. Programs may combine any age group, except for School Age children, while maintaining applicable staff ratios, for activities which include:
 - a. program assemblies;
 - b. special activities;
 - c. field trips; and
 - d. program-wide group times, not to exceed 15 minutes.
9. Programs must adhere to a Precautionary Staff/Child ratio for field trips, swim activities, and other activities that may impose additional safety considerations as follows:

Age Group	Precautionary Staff/Child Ratios
Younger Infants	1 : 2
Older Infants	1 : 2
Younger Toddlers	1 : 3
Older Toddlers	1 : 4
Preschool 3	1 : 5
Preschool 4	1 : 5
Preschool 5-6	1 : 6

School Age K-G3	1 : 7
School Age G4-G6	1 : 10
School Age G7+	1 : 13

10. In addition to program staff, programs may utilize Substitutes and/or Adult Volunteers to satisfy the Precautionary Staff/Child Ratio.
11. Programs must implement more stringent staff/child ratios if providing inclusive settings for children with disabilities and developmental delays, in consideration of the IEPs or IFSPs for students and/or other special learning, health or social and emotional needs of the children in each classroom.
12. All staff required to meet staff/child ratios are awake at all times.
13. Any auxiliary staff who provide additional services within the program do not count in the staff/child ratios.

C. Field Trips

1. For all field trips, programs must:
 - a. provide written notice to parents/guardians of any field trip at least three days in advance;
 - b. have a signed permission slip for each child that states that date, time, location, and means of transportation specific to each individual trip;
 - c. bring emergency information for each child; and
 - d. adhere to the Precautionary Staff/Child ratios.

D. Attendance

1. Each classroom has an individual attendance sheet that lists the first and last names of all children in the room. This list is updated every time that there is a change.
2. The list reflects who is enrolled in the room and who is present at the time.
3. Attendance records are kept for all children.
4. Every classroom has the emergency information for each child.

E. Classroom Transition

1. A child may begin transitioning to the next age group when s/he is:

- a. developmentally ready; and
 - b. within one month of age-eligibility to be included in the next age group.
2. Individualized transition plans are required and developed by the Education Coordinator and/or Site Coordinator, in partnership with classroom teachers and the child's parent/guardian.
 3. A transitioning child does not impact ratio and group size requirements.
 4. Transition activities occur for a defined period of time.
 5. Transition plans travel with the child through transitions, and are kept in the child's file upon completion of the transition.

F. Supervision

1. Classroom staff provide sight and sound supervision during all aspects of the program, which include:
 - a. indoor play;
 - b. outdoor play;
 - c. bathroom use;
 - d. rest or sleep;
 - e. meals and snacks; and
 - f. transitions.
2. Classroom staff are in close proximity to children in order to intervene if necessary.
3. Furniture does not obstruct program staff from visual supervision.
4. Staff do not use cell phones, personal electronic devices, personal reading materials, or are in any other way distracted while part of the staff/child ratio and supervising children.
5. An Infant or Toddler child may never be left unattended in any location that may result in a fall.

G. Staffing Requirements

1. Each program is required to have a:
 - a. qualified Administrator;
 - b. qualified Education Coordinator;

- c. qualified School Age Site Coordinator (if applicable); and
 - d. qualified Night Time Care coordinator (if applicable).
2. In a program with seven or fewer classrooms, at least the Administrator or the Education Coordinator must be a full-time employee. In a program with eight or more classrooms, the Administrator and the Education Coordinator must both be full-time employees.
3. Each group of children is required to have a qualified Teacher.
4. There are sufficient auxiliary staff to ensure the efficient operation of the program.
 - a. Program Leadership and classroom staff may perform these functions, but cannot be counted in the staff/child ratio while doing so.
5. If one qualified individual will assume multiple roles in one or more licensed programs, the program must submit a plan for approval from the Department that includes:
 - a. a time schedule for each location;
 - b. an outline of responsibilities; and
 - c. the staff persons in charge if the individual is not on site.
6. A program whose capacity exceeds 20 children and which prepares and serves meals employs at least one part-time or full-time food service worker.
7. Two or more staff are on-site at all times.
 - a. At least one of these staff are of the level of teacher or Program Leadership.
8. The School Age Site Coordinator and/or Night Time Care Coordinator is onsite during all times that these programs are in operation, and is only assigned to the respective program.
9. At all times, every staff member on site must have photo-identification available.
10. At least 50% of all staff members on-site, are trained under the most recent guidelines of the American Heart Association in:
 - a. pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) (online training is not accepted); and
 - b. basic first aid (online training is accepted).

11. One staff member trained in the use of the Heimlich Maneuver for Infants and Toddlers is on-site at all times.
12. Program must have the consultant services of a licensed pediatric physician or registered pediatric nurse readily available.
 - a. The program has access to such consultation services at all times when children are in care; and
 - b. maintains a letter of understanding for consultation services and a copy of the license for the pediatric physician or registered pediatric nurse.
13. When Program Leadership is not at the program, a designated staff person, who is knowledgeable in the overall functioning of the program, is in charge and maintains responsibility for staff supervision during the times that he/she is in charge.

H. Substitutes

1. The program maintains a list of substitutes who can cover in the event of the absence of staff in order to maintain required staff/child ratios.
2. All substitutes must complete required employment paperwork and are cleared and approved in accordance with the Department's policies on Employment Background Criminal Records and Clearance of Agency Activity checks.
3. Substitutes are not required to complete professional development.

I. Volunteers

1. Programs may utilize two types of volunteers:
 - a. Adult Volunteers:
 - i. are 18 years of age or older;
 - ii. must be cleared and approved in accordance with the Department's policies on Employment Background Criminal Records and Clearance of Agency Activity checks;
 - iii. undergo orientation to program policies and procedures and the volunteer assignment.
 - b. Underage Volunteers:
 - i. are at least 16 years old;
 - ii. are subject to the Department's Clearance of Agency Activity checks;

- iii. undergo orientation to program policies and procedures and the volunteer assignment;
 - iv. are never left alone with or responsible for the supervision of children; and
 - v. may not be utilized in a School Age program.
2. All volunteers work under the supervision of the classroom teacher and Program Leadership and do not engage in any disciplinary action with a child.
 3. Volunteers may be paid or unpaid, at the discretion of the program.
 4. Underage Volunteers, paid or unpaid, are not considered staff members and do not count towards required staff/child ratios.
 5. Adult Volunteers, paid or unpaid, are not considered staff members, and may only count in the Precautionary Staff/Child ratio.

J. Visitors

1. Visitors/observers are not considered volunteers, and are not required to be cleared and approved in accordance with the Department's policies on Employment Background Criminal Records and Clearance of Agency Activity checks.
2. Visitors/observers are never left alone with and are never responsible for the supervision of children.

1.11 Staff Qualifications and Ongoing Professional Development

A. Criminal Record Background Checks and Clearance of Agency Activity

1. All individuals who are responsible for the direct supervision of children, and are to be included in staff/child ratio are required to be cleared and approved in accordance with the Department's policies on Criminal Record Background Check and Clearance of Agency Activity, prior to the assignment of child care duties, and every five years thereafter.
 - a. Within 10 business days of receipt of written notification of disqualifying information, the applicant or staff may appeal the finding of the criminal record background check and/or the Clearance of Agency Activity.

B. Program Leadership

1. Administrator
 - a. The program Administrator is responsible for the operation of the childcare program to ensure compliance with these regulations.

- b. A person who meets all the qualifications in one of the following options may assume the role of program Administrator:
 - i. Option 1: In conjunction with a full-time Education Coordinator, the program Administrator must have a High School diploma, and one year of professional experience in administration and/or business management, and one year of experience working in a licensed/approved early childhood program.
 - ii. Option 2: In conjunction with a part-time Education Coordinator, the program Administrator must have successfully completed at least 12 credits in early childhood education and/or child development at the post-secondary level, and two years of professional experience in administration and/or business management, and two years of experience working in a licensed/approved early childhood program.

2. Education Coordinator

- a. The Education Coordinator is responsible for:
 - i. the execution of the Early Learning and Development section of these regulations;
 - ii. the oversight of classroom groups and staffing; and
 - iii. staff performance and professional development.
- b. A person who meets all the qualifications in one of the following options may assume the role of Education Coordinator:
 - i. Option 1: The individual holds a current RI Department of Education teacher certification for grades pre-kindergarten to second grade and has three months supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may fulfill this requirement).
 - ii. Option 2: The individual holds a current RI Department of Education teacher certification for early childhood special education, which includes early childhood certification, and has three months supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may fulfill this requirement).
 - iii. Option 3: The individual holds a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood education, and has three months supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early

childhood program (student teaching may fulfill this requirement).

- iv. Option 4: The individual holds a bachelor's degree or higher in a related field such as child development, elementary education or special education, and 24 credits in early childhood education from an accredited institution of higher education, and has three months supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may fulfill this requirement).
- v. Option 5: The individual holds a bachelor's degree or higher in a related field such as child development, elementary education or special education, and 12 credits in early childhood education from an accredited or approved institution of higher education, and has one year of supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may contribute towards this requirement).
- vi. Option 6: The individual holds a bachelor's degree or higher in a related field such as child development, elementary education or special education, and RIELDS Certification: *Implementing a Standards-Based Program*, and has one year of supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may contribute towards this requirement).

3. School Age Site Coordinator and/or Night Time Care Coordinator

- a. The School Age Site Coordinator and/or Night Time Care Coordinator is responsible for:
 - i. the execution of the applicable Early Learning and Development section of these regulations;
 - ii. the oversight of classroom groups and staffing; and
 - iii. staff performance and professional development.
- b. A person who is at least 21 years of age and meets all the qualifications in one of the following options may assume the role of School Age Site Coordinator and/or Night Time Care Coordinator:
 - i. Option 1: The individual holds an associates degree or 60 college credit hours, with 18 of them in a related field to education, child development, human services or recreation from an approved and accredited institution of higher education, and has one year supervised teaching experience

in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may contribute towards this requirement).

- ii. Option 2: The individual holds an associate's degree in a related field to education, child development, human services or recreation from an accredited or approved institution of higher education, and has two years supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may contribute towards this requirement).
- iii. Option 3: The individual holds a bachelor's degree or higher in a related field to education, child development, human services or recreation from an accredited or approved institution of higher education, and has one year supervised teaching experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program (student teaching may contribute towards this requirement).
- iv. Option 4: The individual holds a Master's Degree in a related field to education, child development, human services or recreation from an accredited or approved institution of higher education.

C. Classroom Staff

1. Teacher

- a. The classroom teacher works under the supervision and guidance of the Education Coordinator and is responsible for:
 - i. the creation and execution of the classroom level curriculum;
 - ii. the development and implementation of a nurturing environment for the children; and
 - iii. communication with families.
- b. A person who meets all the qualifications in one of the following options may assume the role of teacher:
 - i. Option 1: The individual holds a high school diploma with a vocational concentration in child care, and has two years supervised experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program.
 - ii. Option 2: The individual holds a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate; and has three years supervised experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program.

- iii. Option 3: The individual has completed 12 credits in early childhood education from an accredited institution of higher education, and has at least one year supervised experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program.
- iv. Option 4: The individual has completed 24 credits in early childhood education from an accredited or approved institution of higher education, and has at least three months supervised experience in a licensed/approved early childhood program.
- v. Option 5: The individual holds an associate's degree or higher in a related field to education, child development, human services or recreation from an accredited institution of higher education.

2. Teacher Assistant

- a. The teacher assistant is responsible for supporting the teacher.
- b. A person who meets all the qualifications may assume the role of teacher assistant must be at least 18 years of age, and hold a High School Diploma or a GED certificate.

3. Substitutes

- a. Short-term substitutes meet the same qualifications or credentials as a teacher assistant.
- b. Long-term substitutes meet the staff qualifications or credentials relevant to the position for which they are providing coverage.

D. Auxiliary Staff

- 1. Auxiliary staff must meet qualifications consistent with the skills needed to perform the respective job.
- 2. Consultants and resource staff must meet the professional qualifications or certifications required to perform the respective job.

E. Staff Orientation

- 1. All new staff and volunteers are oriented by Program Leadership during their first week in the program.
- 2. The orientation includes information regarding:
 - a. DCYF Regulations for Child Care Licensure;
 - b. state law governing child abuse and neglect, and reporting procedures;

- c. program policies, procedures, and operations, as documented in the Staff Handbook;
- d. health, safety, and nutrition for all children;
- e. general first aid procedures;
- f. safe sleep practices; and
- g. shaken baby syndrome.

F. Professional Development

1. All Program Leadership and classroom staff, are required to complete 20 hours of training annually aligned with the workforce knowledge and competencies relevant to their role.
2. As part of the required 20 hours, all Program Leadership and classroom staff must complete a certain number of approved hours:

Program Leadership	Teacher	Teacher Assistant
20 total hours required	20 total hours required	20 total hours required
Of these hours, 15 hours must be approved	Of these hours, 10 hours must be approved	Of these hours, 5 hours must be approved

5. Approved hours consist of:
 - a. relevant courses at an approved or accredited institution of higher education; or
 - b. training approved through a process as determined by the Department.
6. Approved hours are documented through a transcript or completion certificate and an approval code.
7. Additional hours consist of:
 - a. workshops/seminars conducted by recognized professionals in the field;
 - b. professional conferences; or
 - c. comparable professional activities.
8. Additional hours are documented through a completion certificate and self-alignment form.

9. Professional development hours are completed annually based on the individual staff member's date of hire.
10. Program Leadership is responsible for developing and overseeing an individualized training plan, aligned with the applicable workforce knowledge and competencies, for each staff person.
11. Staff meetings, staff orientation, other trainings regarding program specific knowledge, and CPR/First Aid certification do not count towards professional development hours.
12. Any staff member who prepares and serves meals must complete eight hours of training per year relevant to their position.
13. For any Infant program, the Education Coordinator and all staff that work with Infants must complete Department approved in-service professional development relating to Infants annually.
14. For any Infant program, licensed subsequent to the date of the regulations, the Education Coordinator and all staff that work with Infants must, prior to the approval of the program, complete Department approved preservice professional development, related to this age group.

1.12 Administration

A. Required Notifications

1. The program is responsible for immediately notifying the Department in writing of major changes which affect the license, including:
 - a. change of Administrator, Education Coordinator, Site Coordinator or Night Time Care Coordinator;
 - b. intent to change the name of the program;
 - c. intent to change ownership of the program;
 - d. intent to change the physical address/location of the program;
 - e. intent to use different/additional spaces for classrooms;
 - f. intent to change the numbers or ages of children served; and/or
 - g. any other major changes in the program.
2. These changes are subject to approval by the Department.
3. The program is responsible for immediately notifying the Department in the event of an emergency situation which includes:
 - a. any death and/or serious injury while in care of the program;

- i. After notifying emergency personnel, events of this nature should then be reported to the Department of Children, Youth and Families' Child Protective Services hotline (1-800-RI-CHILD).
- b. activation of emergency personnel;
- c. occurrence of emergency or disaster;
- d. failure of mechanical systems; or
- e. any legal proceedings filed against a program.

B. General Requirements

1. The program does not exceed the licensed capacity at any time.
2. The program maintains sufficient liability insurance which includes staff, children, physical facilities, and transportation.
3. The program has a confidentiality policy that requires all staff, consultants and volunteers to maintain confidentiality of the child, family and staff information included in files, conversations, observations, meetings, correspondence, social media, cell phones or any other source.
4. Children may not participate in activities including fundraising, publicity, and research, without informed, written consent from the parent/guardian.

C. Arrival and Departure of Children

1. Children are only released to the parent/guardian or to an individual, 18 years of age or older, who is authorized by the parent/guardian to pick up the child and whose identity can be verified by a proper identification card bearing his/her photograph.
2. Approved individuals manually or electronically sign the child in at drop off and sign the child out at pick up, using a full signature or name.
3. Programs must follow policies and procedures that include:
 - a. documenting any custody or restraining orders relating to the child;
 - b. maintaining current written parental/guardian authorization for the release of the child to named individuals, which is updated annually;
 - c. verifying the identity of authorized individuals, including picture identification; and

- d. at the discretion of the program, handling emergency call-in authorization by the parent, including verification of the identity of the parent over the phone.
4. If an adult attempting to pick up a child from the program appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the program:
 - a. does not release the child;
 - b. contacts the local police; and
 - c. contacts the DCYF Child Abuse and Neglect hotline.
5. If children are bused to and from the program, there is a written procedure for monitoring and documenting their arrival and departure.

D. Transportation of Children

1. If the program chooses to provide transportation, a transportation policy must be written.
2. The program is required to adhere to state law and the rules and regulations of the Rhode Island Registry of Motor Vehicles, and comply with state regulations for vehicles regarding:
 - a. registration;
 - b. inspections; and
 - c. insurance.
3. All individuals who provide transportation of children must:
 - a. hold a valid Rhode Island Chauffeur's License or equivalent from another state; and
 - b. have a completed background check on file
4. In addition, vehicles used to transport children must have:
 - a. two-inch lettering on the vehicle (unless leased and then a magnetized sign can be used);
 - b. a fire extinguisher;
 - c. first aid, emergency airway and bodily fluid spill kits; and
 - d. audible door and back-up alarms.

5. At least two staff are in the vehicle while transportation is provided, unless all children being transported are School Age. If all children are School Age, one staff may provide transportation.
6. Children must never be left alone in the vehicle.

E. Handbooks

1. The program must develop a Family Handbook and a Staff Handbook, which must be approved by the Department.
2. The program is responsible to communicate and implement policies and procedures from the handbooks.

F. Records and Files

1. The program maintains program files, and individual files for children and staff that are available on-site at all times.
2. Provisions are made for the protection of files and reports as well as for ensuring confidentiality.
3. Parents/guardians may access their child's file at any time during the program hours of operation.
4. All program, staff, or children's records are subject to review and/or reproduction by the Department or designee upon request during the program hours of operation.
5. Information contained in a child's file is only released to an outside entity with written authorization from the child's parent/guardian.
6. When a child transfers to another program or school, the child's immunization record is released upon request of the parent/guardian.
7. Each child's file must include:
 - a. an application form completed by the parent/guardian containing the child's name, birth date, parent/guardian's name, current address and phone number and work or school address and phone number;
 - b. date of enrollment;
 - c. physician's record of pre-admission examination;
 - d. immunization record;
 - e. other relevant health documents;
 - f. pertinent social information on the child;

- g. written authorization from the parent/guardian for emergency medical treatment;
 - h. written reports of injuries, accidents or illness occurring while the child is in the program and any treatment administered;
 - i. information pertaining to the child's progress, growth and development, including IEP information, if applicable;
 - j. transition plans;
 - k. written authorization from the parent/guardian for the child to participate in and be transported for field trips and other special activities that are not part of the program's daily activities;
 - l. names of individuals to whom the child may be released;
 - m. a statement signed by the parents authorizing the program to act in an emergency; and
 - n. a parental consent form which authorizes or prohibits the program to photograph or videotape a child and to use images in publications, websites and social networking sites.
8. Files for Infants and Toddlers contain the above requirements as well as:
- a. developmental and health history;
 - b. habits of feeding, foods used, and a schedule for introducing new foods;
 - c. toilet and diapering habits and procedures;
 - d. sleep and napping habits;
 - e. child's way of communication and being comforted;
 - f. play interests and habits; and
 - g. personality and temperament specifics.
9. Children's files are updated on an annual basis.
10. Each staff file must include:
- a. personal data sheet or application containing the staff's name, age, home address, phone, education and work experience;
 - b. job description;

- c. fingerprinting documentation, results of criminal record check and Clearance of Agency Activity;
 - d. notarized employment history and criminal record affidavits;
 - e. documentation of employment history verification;
 - f. physical exam form;
 - g. immunization record;
 - i. attendance record;
 - j. staff performance evaluations;
 - k. documentation of qualifications;
 - l. training plan;
 - m. documentation of participation in orientation;
 - n. certification of professional development; and
 - o. statement at time of leaving employment.
11. Programs maintain the following documentation on-site for Department staff to review, if requested, for a minimum of three years:
- a. relevant inspections for physical facilities;
 - b. sign in/sign out logs;
 - c. daily injury/illness and medication administration logs;
 - d. emergency drill log;
 - e. letter of understanding with consultative medical services and copy of license;
 - f. documentation for program pets;
 - g. field trip permission slips and related documentation;
 - h. a financial statement that demonstrates initial and ongoing fiscal responsibility and stability and includes:
 - i. financial assets, liabilities and net worth of the licensee;
 - ii. means of financing; and
 - iii. anticipated yearly budget.

12. Program and staff files must be updated regularly to include new information and changes in information.

1.13 Early Learning and Development

A. Curriculum: Program and Classroom Level; Content

1. Programs maintains program and classroom level curriculum.
2. The program level curriculum is informed by program philosophy, beliefs, and practices, and is guided by the RI Early Learning and Development Standards.
3. The program level curriculum considers the developmentally appropriate needs of all children served.
4. Written or electronic documentation of the classroom level curriculum (lesson plans or planning documentation) is easily accessible in each individual classroom.
5. Classroom level curriculum is completed on a weekly basis and includes:
 - a. a list of activities and opportunities available to children throughout the week;
 - b. materials and equipment that are needed to support activities and opportunities; and
 - c. relevant RI Early Learning and Development Standards.
6. Classroom level curriculum for the previous three months is maintained on-site.
7. The Education Coordinator meets with each teacher to consult on program planning and to assist in the planning for individual children at least monthly.
8. Teachers sharing planning information with other classroom staff.

B. Curriculum: Process

1. Children have access to a variety of experiences, activities, and opportunities.
2. Staff provides experiences and environments that go beyond routine care and supervision.
3. Opportunities for physical activity (60-minutes total) are available to children each day.

4. Television or other screen time is limited to no more than 30 minutes per day for each child or group with the following considerations and limitations:
 - a. prohibited for Infants;
 - b. prohibited during scheduled meal and snack times;
 - c. group activities (not to exceed one event per month per group) are permitted for Toddler, Preschool, and School Age children, such as watching a movie, provided that alternate supervised activities remain available to children.
 - d. Exceptions can be made, for School Age children, to specified time limits in the following situations:
 - i. electronic media used for children's homework;
 - ii. e-readers for reading;
 - iii. smart boards and tablets for hands-on learning activities.

C. Curriculum: Teaching and Facilitation

1. Teachers are required to:
 - a. implement the classroom level curriculum;
 - b. actively engage with children;
 - c. develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is responsive, attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive and culturally sensitive;
 - d. serve as a positive role model for children;
 - e. use positive methods in guiding and redirecting children;
 - f. encourage appropriate behavior and set clear limits;
 - g. match expectations with the children's developing abilities and capabilities;
 - h. praise the children's accomplishments as well as their attempts at tasks;
 - i. create a positive environment through their own behaviors such as frequent social conversations with children, joint laughter and affection, eye contact, pleasant tone of voice and smiles; and
 - j. assist children who present challenging behaviors by:

- i. identifying and documenting factors that may predict or contribute to the challenging behavior;
 - ii. making adaptations to the child's environment as necessary;
 - iii. supporting families by sharing documentation and information; and
 - iv. providing connection to relevant services and outside resources, when necessary.
2. At least one classroom teacher sits with children at the table during meals and snack time and engages with children to model appropriate mealtime behavior.
3. Programs make accommodations for children whose primary language is not English, or require alternative communication methods.
4. The program provides School Age children assistance with homework, as needed.

D. Curriculum: Context

1. Classrooms are arranged into learning areas that promote center-based play.
2. Child-accessible storage is provided for children's belongings in or near the classroom.
3. Classroom arrangement:
 - a. allows for clear pathways around the classroom;
 - b. ensures visual supervision by staff;
 - c. separates noisy and quiet activities; and
 - d. provides the children with ample opportunity for freedom of movement in a safe, clean, and uncluttered area.
4. Classroom arrangement in an Infant/Toddler may include a contained play space that:
 - a. encourages safe exploration;
 - b. promotes teacher/child interaction; and
 - c. is never used as a means of isolation.
5. Each classroom has:

- a. furniture and seating to accommodate the number and size of children in the group;
 - b. accessible materials to accommodate the number of children in the group, that support a wide range of developmentally and culturally appropriate experiences, activities and opportunities; and
 - c. comfortable seating for staff in Infant/Toddler programs.
 6. Teachers post and follow a regular daily schedule.
 7. Staff must make adaptations to the daily schedule to meet the interests and needs of the children, and to cope with weather changes, or other situations that may affect routines.
 8. The daily schedule allows for
 - a. child-directed play;
 - b. teacher-directed play;
 - c. quiet and active play;
 - d. large group, small group, and individual play;
 - e. outdoor play;
 - f. rest appropriate to the needs of children (non-sleeping children must have access to quiet activities); and
 - g. additional routine care.
- E. Child Assessment
1. Staff work collaboratively with local school districts to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in child outreach screening.
 2. Screening is not used to label a child, determine a child's placement in the program, deny a child's entrance into the program, or to infer a child's readiness.
 3. If the child has an IEP or IFSP, the program works with the school district to support the child's IEP/IFSP.
- F. Family Engagement
1. Prior to enrollment, programs provide opportunities for the child and parent/guardian to visit the program.
 2. Programs conduct and document a preadmission family conference.

3. Families are kept informed through communication including the Family Handbook, periodic newsletters, and ongoing contact with program and classroom staff.
4. Programs make accommodations for families whose primary language is not English, or require alternative methods of communications.
5. If a program chooses to suspend or terminate a child for any reason the program must provide written documentation to the parent/guardian, which includes the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of the child, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any.
6. There is a means of written/electronic daily communication between staff and families in Infant/Toddler programs which includes information about the child's routine care.
7. A directory of community resources is available to families.
8. The program is open to families for observations and visits whenever the program is in operation.
9. Families are given the opportunity to engage in their child's early learning and development.