



# Rhode Island Department of Human Services

## Child Care Licensing Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

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Updated 1/31/2020

### GENERAL

#### Why did the Child Care Licensing team transfer from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to the Department of Human Services (DHS)?

The Child Care Licensing team transferred to DHS to strengthen child care services for Rhode Islanders and better support the workforce. Since DHS oversees the Office of Child Care and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), DHS already works with most providers in the State and therefore is in a strong position to support the early childhood workforce. We are excited by this opportunity for the Child Care Licensing team to become a part of DHS.

#### When is the Child Care Licensing team transferring to DHS?

The Child Care Licensing team officially transferred out of DCYF and officially became part of DHS on **October 28, 2019**.

#### Where can I find information related to the transfer?

- Information will be posted on the DCYF website: <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/licensing-child-care/licensing.php> until a new DHS Child Care Licensing page will be added to the DHS website by the end of October 2019.
- Announcements and updates will be sent directly from DHS by email. In addition, these will also be posted on the DHS Child Care Licensing page: <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Programs/CCAPLicensing.php> and social media platforms: <https://www.facebook.com/RhodeIslandDHS/> or <https://twitter.com/RIHumanServices>
- Child care providers may also reach out to early childhood partners, such as BrightStars. Family child care providers are also encouraged to reach out to their SEIU representative.

#### Who do I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions about the transfer of the Child Care Licensing Unit, or any other Child Care Licensing related questions, you can email: [DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov)

#### When did the most recent All Provider Meeting take place?

The All Provider meeting took place on Monday December 2, 2019 from 9:30-11:00 AM at the Arnold Conference Center located at 111 Howard Avenue, Regan Building, Cranston 02920. Providers had the opportunity to speak with DHS and the Child Care Licensing Unit. If there are any additional questions or concerns following the meeting, you can email: [DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov) or call 401-462-3009.

#### How will this transfer affect me?

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*For child care providers, the day-to-day responsibility of providing safe, quality care to children as outlined by current child care licensing regulations will not change.* DHS is looking forward to building stronger relationships with partnering agencies and the child care workforce as this transfer occurs.

### Are foster care or protective services licensing also moving to DHS?

No. Foster Care Licensing and Child Protective Services investigations will continue to be overseen by DCYF. Questions related to Foster Care Licensing may be referred to: [veronica.davis@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:veronica.davis@dcyf.ri.gov).

### How can I find a licensed child care provider?

Licensed child care providers may be found through:

<https://exceed.ri.gov/pages/families/Search/FamilySearchResults.aspx>.

On this website, families may search for licensed child care programs by type, location, ages served, quality level (including QRIS rating or national accreditations), and financial assistance acceptance.

### *If I'm currently licensed as a child care provider...*

#### Do I need to do anything?

No. All active child care licenses (Group/Family Child Care Home, Center) will remain valid and current licensing regulations and requirements are still in place.

#### Will this affect monitoring visits?

While monitoring checklists used by licensors may be redesigned for ease of use, the current child care licensing regulations will remain the same. Child care providers should continue to reference regulations to ensure safe and healthy care for children. Updated forms, including the monitoring checklists, will be publicly available on the DHS Child Care Licensing page on the DHS website.

#### When will site visits take place and how frequently?

As required by federal mandate, site visits will occur at least once annually. These visits will be unannounced and may occur more frequently.

#### Where do I submit my application or renewal application?

Beginning on Monday, October 28, 2019, applications or renewal applications may be submitted by mail to:

Office of Child Care Licensing Unit  
25 Howard Ave, Building 57  
Cranston, RI 02920

When paying an application fee, checks must be made out to: Rhode Island General Treasury.

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### Will there still be a licensing fee?

Yes. Fees will remain the same. The following fees have been established based on the Application type:

- Change of Address - **\$100**
- Child Care Center (Initial)- **\$500**
- Child Care Center (Renewal)- **\$500**
- Family Child Care Home License (Initial) - **\$100**
- Family Child Care Home License (Renewal) - **\$100**
- Group Family Child Care Home License - **\$250**

In addition to the Application fees, the following individuals for **Family Child Care Homes AND Group Family Child Care Homes**, must **each pay a ten dollar fee (\$10.00)** for each Department Clearance request:

- Providers
- Assistant(s)
- Emergency assistants

### Where do I mail other documents related to Child Care Licensing now?

Office of Child Care Licensing Unit  
25 Howard Ave, Building 57  
Cranston, RI 02920

### How will my current license be impacted?

All current child care licenses will remain valid upon the transfer. All child care licenses will still be subjected to the same renewal process and licensing regulations.

### I am in the process of renewal, will this disrupt my renewal process?

No. All pending applications received by DCYF prior to 10/28/19 have been brought over during the transfer for completion. Any renewals received by DCYF after the transfer date will be forwarded to DHS at

Office of Child Care Licensing Unit  
25 Howard Ave, Building 57  
Cranston, RI 02920

Please submit new application or renewal applications to the address above.

### Are Child Care Licensing due dates, expiration dates, and standard Licensing timelines going to change?

No. Current child care licenses and regulations will remain valid and renewal applications will continue to be sent out 6 months in advance of the expiration date listed on your current license.

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### **Will there be new child care licensing regulations?**

The current regulations listed on the DCYF website remain valid: <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/licensing-child-care/>  
In 2020, DHS may propose updated Family Child Care and Group Family Child Care regulations for public comment as required by state law prior to filing.

### **If I need to contact the team or my licensor, how do I get in touch?**

Child care providers can reach out to the Child Care Licensing team by email at [DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov) or by phone at 401-462-3009 for all questions or concerns.

### **If I contact the Child Care Licensing team by phone, does anyone speak Spanish?**

Yes, the Implementation Aide is bilingual in English and Spanish. It is also a DHS priority to hire multilingual licensing staff; currently, there is at least 1 licensor on staff who bilingual in English and Spanish.

### **Will providers be assigned new licensors? How will I know who is my new licensor?**

Providers will be assigned new licensors. Beginning this winter, all providers will have the opportunity to meet the new licensing staff. As new licensors are assigned to programs, the licensors will reach out directly to providers. Additionally, the Child Care Licensing team is committed to visiting each program in the first few months of the new year. This will allow for licensors and programs to meet in-person and for an initial monitoring visit to be conducted by DHS.

### **Will this impact my CCAP payments or CACFP?**

No. This transfer will not impact your CCAP payments or CACFP.

### **Will participation in BrightStars be mandatory for all licensed providers?**

Participation in BrightStars remains optional for all licensed providers who choose not to participate in or accept CCAP. **For licensed providers participating in CCAP**, participation in BrightStars will continue to be mandatory.

### **What should I tell parents/guardians about the transfer, if anything?**

Child care providers may choose to share this news with parents/guardians of children in care. You may choose to refer parents/guardians to the upcoming DHS Child Care Licensing Unit webpage as an additional resource.

### **Are there office hours for the Licensing Unit?**

Yes. The Unit will hold office hours on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:30 AM to 12 PM and from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM; however, if providers have specific questions for his/her licensor, it is best to reach out directly to the licensor.

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## Child Care Licensing Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

**\*New\***

### **Where can I find information related to the Emergency Rule Filing version of the Group and Family Child Care Licensing regulations?**

The Group and Family Child Care Licensing regulations may be accessed at:

<http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Regulations/index.php> In early February, the Child Care Licensing team will also be sending out a memo to licensed providers with information related to the emergency rule filing regulations and the plan for updating regulations in the future. The memo will then be posted on the DHS Child Care Licensing webpage: <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/Programs/CCAPLicensing.php>.

*The following questions have been added in response to questions received during the All Provider Meeting on December 2, 2019.*

### **Who will receive and review the Customer Service Feedback form that providers will be asked to complete after licensing visits?**

The Customer Service Feedback form, an optional electronic form, will go to DHS leadership. It will better help DHS understand the experiences of providers as they interact with state staff.

### **Will the new forms be available to fill out online?**

Monitoring forms will be completed by licensors online via tablet. DHS would like to move toward using technology where it makes sense.

### **How will I get a copy of the form if a licensor completes the form on a tablet? How do we require the licensor completes the form onsite?**

Providers should **never** sign a monitoring report that has not been completed at their facility and/or **gone over with the provider to ensure understanding and clarity**. Licensors will be trained to complete all forms onsite. The monitoring report completed on a tablet can be directly emailed to the provider. Monitoring forms will be reviewed by supervisors prior to posting online, which would be the only time the forms may change (e.g. if leadership needed to remove confidential information in the form before posting); if edits are made, the provider will be notified.

### **Regarding fire marshals and inspections: Do we still need a state fire marshal to conduct an inspection, or can it be a local fire inspector? Should there be designated fire marshal for child care? How/can new fire code requirements be shared with providers?**

DHS does not oversee fire marshals; however, DHS will follow up to convene a meeting with fire marshals to review these concerns. Per the licensing requirements, an inspection must be completed by a state level fire marshal. Related to sharing the new fire code, DHS and LISC will collaborate to see how this content can be more easily shared with providers.

### **Is it possible to set up professional development opportunities [for providers] related to compliance – i.e. clarifications of regulations?**

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DHS is looking at this in a two-fold manner: (1) creating guidance document(s) for distribution to providers, and (2) implementing the 100 Day Action Plan, where every program is visited, and licensors can see firsthand where guidance is needed or hear directly from providers on their needs. Additional actions that DHS is taking to support providers include revisiting the Health and Safety trainings for clarity, accessibility, and compliance. In addition, RIELDS trainings will be available online on the CELP website <https://center-elp.org/> beginning January 2020.