

Early Care and Education Options



Child Care Centers (Licensed or Exempt)

Child care centers are usually located in spaces adapted for child care purposes. These include stand-alone centers and those located in businesses, apartment complexes, universities, schools, hospitals, churches, etc. Pre Kindergarten programs (both school-based and non school-based) Head Start programs, on-site employee child care and faith based child care are some of the examples of the many types of child care centers that are available.

Licensed Centers

Must pass an initial inspection to ensure that all standards have been met, and must:

- Meet physical facility requirements
- Follow health, safety and nutrition guidelines
- Maintain enrollment and attendance records
- Allow parents access to their children in care at all times
- Comply with three routine inspections per year
- Receive 40 hours of training initially - 8 hours annually
- Submit screening and background checks of all employees/caregivers
- Keep current immunization records of children on file.

Religious Exempt Centers

Must be an integral part of a church or parochial school, and must:

- Be accredited by a state recognized accrediting body
- Pass federal background check
- Meet city/county health and safety regulations
- Are not government inspected



Family Child Care Homes

(Licensed or Registered)

Family Child Care is regulated care that takes place in a caregiver's home. Group size may vary according to caregiver preferences and state/ local regulations. Ages often vary, although some caregivers service only a specific age group (e.g., infants, toddlers or preschoolers).

Registered Homes

Are not required to meet minimum state requirements, except as follows:

- Register annually
- Complete and provide to parents an annual health and safety home inspection checklist
- Provide proof of substitute care
- Proof of screening/background checks of adults in household
- Keep current immunization records of children on file
- Complete a 30-hour family child care course prior to caring for children
- Complete 10 clock hours of training annually

Licensed Homes

Must meet all requirements for registration and must:

- Follow health, safety and nutrition guidelines
- Maintain enrollment and attendance records
- Comply with licensing standards of local and state governments
- Maintain current certification of CPR and first aid
- Pass an initial inspection prior to receiving a license
- Comply with two routine inspections per year



School Age Care

(Licensed or Exempt)

The setting for a School-Age Child Care program may be a school, child care center, family child care home, church, or community/recreation program.

Licensed Programs

Must pass an initial state inspection to ensure that all standards required by statute have been met and must:

- Meet physical facility requirements
- Follow health, safety and nutrition guidelines
- Maintain enrollment and attendance records
- Allow parents access to their children in care at all times
- Comply with three routine inspections per year

- Receive 40 hours of training initially - 8 hours annually
- Submit screening and background checks of all employees/caregivers
- Comply with a 1:25 adult/child ratio

Licensed Exempt Programs

The following programs are exempt from school-age care licensure, but must meet city/county health and safety regulations (exempt programs are not government inspected):

- private and public schools operating school-age care programs
- summer camps (residential and day camps)
- programs that are an integral part of a church or parochial school
- bible school conducted during vacation periods



Unregulated Care (No state requirements or inspections)

In-Home Care

Takes place in the child's own home. It may be an independent arrangement between parent and caregiver or formal arrangement between parent, caregiver or formal arrangement between parent, caregiver and/or nanny/au-pair agency.

Informal Care

Takes place in the caregiver's home where one adult cares for children from only one family. The caregiver is often a relative, neighbor and/or friend. This type of care has no state guidelines or inspections.

Summer Camps & Recreational Programs

Operate only during summer breaks from educational institutions. Summer care is provided for children in kindergarten and above. Adult/child ratios vary. This type of care requires no state inspections. Personnel other than owners/operators are not required to be fingerprinted but must comply with all other screening requirements.

Resort/Hotel Care

Establishments that provide child care solely for guests. All child care staff must be screened.

Note: Some counties may have more restrictive requirements than those required by the state.