



Licensed Child Care: What Does a License Tell Me?

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MOST CHILD CARE IN CALIFORNIA MUST BE LICENSED

California licenses:

- Full-day child care centers, usually operating year-round
- Part-day centers, often called preschools or nursery schools, often operating only during the school year
- Infant/toddler centers, for children under two years
- School-age centers, for children in kindergarten or higher grades
- Family child care homes, child care in the home of the provider
- Parent cooperatives (if they have paid staff)



WHAT DOES A CHILD CARE LICENSE MEAN?

State licensing requirements cover:

- how many children each adult can care for
- health and safety standards
- training for staff
- FBI background check for staff
- communication with parents
- discipline methods.

Programs are licensed by the Community Care Licensing division of the state Department of Social Services. Before a program is licensed, a state licensing analyst visits to make sure it meets all the requirements. After that, a licensing analyst visits once every five years or when there is a complaint.

Important!

Licensing sets **minimum** standards for child care. You should ask to see a program's license, but it does not guarantee that the program is of high quality, or that it is right for your child and your family. Ask questions, visit, and use your own judgment.

See 4Cs Tips on choosing child care.

For specific rules for child care centers and family child care homes, see other side

SOME CHILD CARE DOES NOT REQUIRE A LICENSE

- care provided in the child's home or by relatives.
- family child care for the children of just one family in addition to the provider's own children.
- care provided in a parent cooperative with no paid staff and no more than 12 children there at the same time.
- Public recreation programs and school-age programs operated by public or private schools.

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Number of children each adult cares for

The state sets a maximum number of children each adult can care for, depending on the children's ages:

For children under 2: 1 adult/4 children

For children 2 - 5: 1 adult/12 children

For children over 5: 1 adult/14 children

Training for staff

Directors

At least 12 college units in early childhood education or child development; at least 3 units in administration.

Teachers

At least 12 college units in early childhood education or child development; half completed before starting job.

In infant centers

Teachers and directors must complete 3 additional college units in infant care.

Health and Safety Training

Someone on the site - - at least one teacher or the director -- must have 15 hours of training in child care health and safety, including Infant/Child CPR and first aid.

Communication with parents

Child care centers must inform parents about children's activities, their development, and how they are adjusting to the program.

Parents' and Children's Rights

In any licensed child care center or family child care home:

- Parents have the right to visit any time without making an appointment.
- Children may not be disciplined with physical punishment or other harsh methods.
- As a parent, you have the right to get information about any complaints made against your child care provider. Call 1-844-538-8766 or visit cclد.ca.gov.
- Children with special needs are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act. See 4Cs Tips on Choosing Child Care for Children with Special Needs.



LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE

Number of children

The state licenses two sizes of family child care homes:

“Small” family child care

(the provider alone can care for the children without an assistant):

Up to 6 children

No more than 3 younger than two years
An additional 2 school-age children, if parents are notified in writing.

“Large” family child care

(the provider cares for the children with an assistant):

Up to 12 children

No more than 4 younger than two years
An additional 2 school-age children, if parents are notified in writing.

(All the numbers include the provider's own children under age 10)

Training and experience

- Providers must have 15 hours of training in child care health and safety, including Infant/Child CPR and first aid.
- Providers in “large” family child care homes must have one prior year of experience as a licensed family child care provider or center administrator.