



Charlie Crist
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State Surgeon General

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Child Care Licensing Program

Frequently Asked Questions

These are questions we have received on our "Contact Us" email. If you have a question, most likely someone else has the same one. We will update this page regularly to share the information given. If you have a question, please feel free to hit the "Contact Us" button on the website and it will be answered quickly and then added to this area on the following update.

Thanks and as always, please feel free to email or call us anytime with any questions or concerns you may have!

Answers were correct in the timeframe they were posed. Information and regulation is subject to change, please check back or call for updates.

Updated August 2010

Question Regarding Homes:

I am wondering if you have a name of a location that I can take my extinguisher to be inspected. Normally I have a company called "Rescue One" come out to my childcare home and inspect it, but they have become so expensive. I appreciate any help or direction you can give me.

Answer:

If you call your local fire department, they will be able to refer you to some places in your area.

Question Regarding Homes:

My concern: I currently reside in an apartment complex, and reading and studying the rules and requirements of a family child care home, am I not eligible to become a licensed or registered facility since I do not have private outdoor play space and fencing? My apartment home has several large areas for indoor play space, but no outside play areas.

I would only be caring for infants, from birth through 16 months of age as I am currently pregnant with my first child and will be taking care of him/her. The licensing would allow me to have 3 children in my care, not including my own child, do they still require 50 sq ft each of outdoor play space for infants only?

Answer:

You are correct that if you do not have an appropriate sized outdoor play area for the child care children, then you are unable to be licensed. All children, including infants, are required to have outdoor time with



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weather permitting. Further, the outdoor space would need to be used for childcare only when children are in care, and unfortunately there is no way to guarantee that on a shared playground.

Follow up Question from Previous Question:

Thank you for your prompt response to my question. I now know that I can not be licensed, but does the outdoor play space requirement also negate my ability to be a registered home?

Answer:

In Pinellas County we do not register we only license.

Question Regarding Homes:

Do you accept the online First aid CPR programs?

Answer:

We accept online First Aid Courses. Currently, we accept online CPR courses as long as there is an in person classroom, instructor based assessment to complete the course. The First Aid and CPR courses have to include infants and children. I do not know of an online CPR course in our area as this is a newly accepted procedure.

Question Regarding Centers:

I am currently a stay at home mother and am looking into starting up a daycare center (outside of the home). I was an elementary school teacher (grades 2 & 3) for the past 5 years until our school was shut down last year and I had my first child. I am looking for any information or someone to contact in regards to starting up a daycare and how I would go about this process. I have been looking over the DCF website and found some useful information, but was wondering if this includes all information I need to begin this process. I was having trouble finding information about the type of building (house vs strip mall type setting). We have been looking at leasing properties and have found many with decent square footage, but no outdoor play spaces or even room to put one and was wondering what the regulations were in regard to outdoor play areas, if one is required if we found adequate space indoors etc. Your help with any information or a contact to set me in the right direction to get this process started would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Answer:

Thank you for your inquiry. We will please to assist you in opening a children's center in Pinellas County. In answer to your questions: 1. Please visit our website and visit the Children's Center section. There is a place to download "Procedures for Opening a Children's Center." This packet includes all of the information you will need to begin the process. 2. All children's centers must have outdoor play space. The only exceptions are indoor recreation facilities, which can only care for children for up to 4 hours a day and have 3000 usable square indoor floor space for gross motor activities, or an urban center that shows proof from their municipality that there is not ability to have outdoor space. They too need to provide indoor space to allow for gross motor activities. When you are seriously considering a specific space you should contact us at 507-4857 and based on the location, a licensing specialist will work with you to do a preliminary site inspection to see if all requirements can be met. You will also need approved



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building, electric, fire and health inspection prior to us being able to give you a license. 3. Finally, every children's center in the state of Florida must have a director with an active Director Credential. The DCF website will give you information on how to obtain one, if you do not already have it. Please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Question Regarding Homes:

I am interested in opening a home daycare. Please send me the starter packet.

Answer:

I am not sure if you noticed, but all the documents are downloadable from our website. They are under the sections, "thank you for your interest in a family child care home". We can mail you a packet if you are unable to print it.

Question Regarding Centers:

My daughter is 10 months old and attends a child care center in Dunedin, FL. They told us that they were inspected yesterday and that the inspector told them that they are no longer allowed to warm bottles with a liner, such as the playtex bottles. I would like to know if this is correct? If so why?

Answer:

It is not against Child Care Regulations to warm a bottle with a liner. This sounds like it could be a business practice or personal preference.

Follow up: The reason they would not heat the bottle with a liner, is because the bottle stated not to.

Question Regarding Centers:

I enrolled my son in their summer camp Friday the 11th of June. The first day he was bullied by a boy older than him. They don't have enough counselors. I paid them to watch my kid and for my kid to be safe. Now I have to pull my kid out of this camp and the offenders get to stay. Florida is supposed to protect kids from bullies. This place needs to be monitored and forced to put measures into place if they are going to allow young kids to be with older kids.

Answer:

By definition, Summer Camps for school age children do not require licensure by our agency. However, we want to give you information about how you can find a licensed school age summer program and also what recourse you do have against the camp. Someone from our agency will be contacting you shortly.

Follow up: If you suspect that children are being abused, or neglected through inadequate supervision, please notify the Abuse Hotline at 800-96-ABUSE.

Question Regarding Homes:

I am trying to find out information about licensed home day care centers in my area of Clearwater. We are looking for someone to take care of my granddaughter a few hours a day.

Is there such a list available or please direct me on how to find the information.

Answer:



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If you go to www.pclb.org you can find providers and read their previous inspections on line. You can also just connect to the following link: <https://dcfsanswrite.state.fl.us/pinellaspublic/>

You can enter the zip code for the area you are looking for. There are both homes and centers on the site, and if you have any further questions, please let us know.

Question Regarding Centers:

Hello-my center wants to submit an application because we want to add 2 year olds to our program. Is there somewhere on your website that I can print the application to send in with my \$25? I talked with my licensing rep and she said I needed to send both of these in, but I cannot find this application.

Answer:

We do not have applications on line due to the statutory requirements that limit the time the application remains valid. Please call our offices at 727-507-4857 to have one mailed to you.

Question Regarding Homes:

I have read through the new 2010 regs book and I don't see anything about supervision of our own children. Maybe its there and I over looked it. Is licensing still saying our children have to be supervised like the day care children or is supervision being left to our discretion? Also I was asked to ask about our children over 13 and weather they can have friends over to the house? Can they have a friend over and not put us over our numbers and out of compliance?

Answer:

To answer the question, on page 17 of the regulations I.C.(1)(c) household children under 13 years of age must be supervised in compliance with the regulations.

If there is any child in the home during operating hours, they are counted as being under the provider's care and included in the numbers.

Question Regarding Centers:

I am the Provider Liaison for West Central Early Steps. I would like clarification on the following two questions to inform our service providers who serve children in the Early Steps Program within a day care setting:

1. Are therapists (speech, occupational and physical) and Infant Toddler Developmental Specialists (early childhood education teachers) considered Child Enrichment Service Providers?
2. If so and based on page 16 of the Children's Center Licensing Regulations 5/2010, a Child Enrichment Service Provider must meet the Level 2 FBI screening requirements to be able to take a child out of the classroom (not be required to be under the direct and constant supervision of child care personnel). Now my question is, if a Child Enrichment Service Provider does not have documentation of meeting the screening requirements, can he (she) work with that child within the classroom under the direct and constant supervision of child care personnel?



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Answer:

The definition of a Child Enrichment Service Provider on page 5 of our regulations says " an individual who provides enrichment activities, such as language training, music instruction, educational instruction....." It goes on to say that "The child's parent shall provide written consent before a child may participate in activities.....child enrichment provider receives compensation from a child's parent or from the children's center, and shall not be considered a volunteer or child care personnel." So, if the therapist or specialist receives compensation, then they can be considered a Child Enrichment Provider, and the answer to question # 2 would be that they do not require Level 2 screening if they were in a classroom under the direct and constant supervision of child care personnel. If they do not receive compensation from either the parent or the children's center then they could not be considered a Child Enrichment Service Provider.

In any case, any person who would be alone with a child, and not under direct supervision of screened child care personnel would be required to have Level 2 screening clearance.

Many screening changes are coming effective August 1, 2010 due to the passage of House Bill 7069. It narrows considerably those who have contact with children, with or without supervision of screened personnel who do not require Level 2 background screening. We are still awaiting information from DCF on how the new law will be translated into regulations. As soon as our office receives that information we will be sure to send clarification or correction to you.

Question Regarding Homes:

In the packet that was sent out to family child care providers there were forms provided at the end. Many of those forms state at the top that they are the forms for CENTERS not homes, while there are correct forms available on the web site for family child care providers. It would be helpful to providers to have correct forms sent out to them when a mailing is done. Many providers think that they MUST use these forms now that they have been provided to them. Can you inform us if you are requiring providers to use the form if they don't want to? Florida Administrative Code does not require that a form be used only that the operator ensures they are in compliance.

(s) All parts of the home, both indoors and outdoors; including the furnishings, equipment, and plumbing shall be kept clean, and sanitary, free from hazards, in an orderly condition and in good repair at all times.

1. It is the responsibility of the director/operator to ensure all areas of the facility are free from fire hazards such as lint and dust build up in heating and air vents, filters, exhaust fans, ceiling fans, and dryer vents.

It is unclear to providers as to why PCLB takes the time to make up 2 forms one for inside and one for outside when DCF has just one form to use, which covers both areas. The one DCF uses also seems a little bit nicer and user friendly. Is there a reason PCLB does not use their forms?

When administrative code at state level is written that a form must be used and we change it does it mean we are still in compliance with the code and meet DCF's requirements?



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Again, it is not a requirement by DCF to document these things on the form, they are only a tool to help them remember to check.

Answer:

The forms are marked as sample when they are not required. They are there for the provider's convenience; a provider is allowed to use their own system. However, since we receive numerous requests for sample forms we make them available to all and not just those who request them. If a form is required it is marked and stated as such.

Question Regarding Centers:

If you hire someone before June 1st is it true that they must complete 10 hours of training before July 31st.

Even if hired May 31st? IT IS NO LONGER PRORATED!

Answer:

On page 38 of our regulations it says under i. "All child care personnel continuously employed or hired between July 1 and June 1 of the state's fiscal year must complete the annual in-service training requirement. This includes any changes in employment from one program to another". That is from 65C-22.003. Therefore, someone hired before June 1st does need the 10 hours of in-service training. The only exception to this would be if they are brand new to childcare, and have 90 days to start their training. If they have been in childcare previously, they do need to complete the 10 hours.

Follow up Question to Above:

I did this so you could add to your blog or Q & A site. I am still a little unclear on background I am so sorry. I came back and looked at an employee file and her FBI date is 8/26/2005 we rescreened for FDLE on 9/15/2009 so because it is prior to 8/1 we do not need to do anything for her until 9/15/2014 correct.

Any one whos five year expires from here forth will need fingerprinting
My next to expire is 2/1/2011 so should I screen her now.

Answer:

Sorry for the confusion, but I think that you have it now. In the past, we only required an FDLE be done every 5 years. So, everyone had an FDLE and an FBI from when they first entered the industry, and then an FDLE every 5 years. Now, as of August 1, 2010, if your 5 year rescreen is due (your FDLE is expiring), then you need to be fingerprinted so that you will get back an FDLE and an FBI clearance. This needs to be done prior to the FDLE expiration date. You are correct, that if an FDLE doesn't expire until 9-15-14 you do not have to do anything now, because Secretary Sheldon's first letter said that this will not be retroactive – only from 8-1-10 and forward. Now, for re-screening a 2-1-11 expiration, you are certainly welcome to have that person fingerprinted at any time before 2-1-11. Just remember, that it will be that much sooner that they will need to be completely rescreened again in 2015. Please call us if you need any further clarification.