

## This Brochure Provides Information About:

- The requirements that State-regulated family child care homes and child care centers must meet,
- Your rights and responsibilities as the parent of a child in regulated care, and
- How and where to file a complaint if you believe your child care provider has violated State child care licensing regulations.

## Who Regulates Child Care?

All child care in Maryland is regulated by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Childhood Development. Within the Division, child care licensing is the specific responsibility of the Office of Child Care (OCC), Licensing Branch.

All child care facilities must meet minimum health, safety, and program standards set by Maryland law. To remain licensed, facilities must maintain compliance with those standards. Every licensed facility is inspected by OCC at least once each year to evaluate the facility's compliance with child care regulations.

OCC's thirteen Regional Offices are responsible for licensing activities, including:

- Issuing child care licenses;
- Inspecting child care facilities;
- Investigating complaints against licensed child care facilities;
- Investigating reports of unlicensed (illegal) child care; and
- Taking enforcement action when necessary to achieve compliance with regulations.

**There are two types of regulated child care facilities: family child care homes and child care centers.**

## Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers Must Meet the Following Requirements:

- Have the approval of OCC, the fire department and other local agencies, as required (i.e., zoning, health, and environment).
- Provide care only in the areas of the facility that have been approved for use.
- Have the license issued by OCC posted where it is easily and clearly visible to parents. The license shows:
  - the maximum number of children who may be present at the same time;
  - the age groups which may be served; and
  - the facility's approved hours of operation.
- At all times, each child must be supervised in a manner appropriate to the child's age, activities, and individual needs.
- All areas of the facility used for child care must be clean, well lit, and properly ventilated. Room temperatures should be comfortable.
- If food service is provided, food must be stored, prepared, and served in a safe, sanitary and healthful manner.
- The facility must offer a daily program of indoor and outdoor activities that are appropriate to the age, needs and capabilities of each child.
- An up-to-date emergency information card must be on file and maintained for each child.
- The facility must post an approved emergency evacuation plan and conduct evacuation drills at least monthly.
- Child discipline procedures must be appropriate to a child's age and maturity level and may not include the deliberate infliction of physical or emotional pain. **Corporal punishment of any kind is strictly prohibited.**

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### The Maryland Child Care Credential

Maryland has a voluntary child care credentialing program that recognizes child care providers' education, experience and professional activities at six levels.

Credentialed providers are authorized and encouraged to display the seal issued by the MSDE Office of Child Care.



### Program Accreditation

Child care programs have the option of becoming state or nationally accredited. Accreditation means that the facility and staff have met program standards of quality.

### Child Care and the Americans with Disabilities Act

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all child care programs to make reasonable efforts to accommodate children with disabilities. For more information about the ADA, please contact the OCC Regional Office in your area or one of the following organizations:

#### LOCATE: Child Care

Maryland Committee for Children, Inc.  
608 Water Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Phone: (410) 752-7588  
[www.mdchildcare.org](http://www.mdchildcare.org)

#### Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

217 East Redwood Street, Suite 1300  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Phone: (410) 767-3670  
(800) 305-6441 (within Maryland)  
[www.md-council.org](http://www.md-council.org)



State of Maryland  
Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Maryland State Department of Education  
Nancy S. Grasmick  
State Superintendent of Schools

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# A PARENT'S GUIDE

TO



# REGULATED

# CHILD CARE

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*Important Information for  
Parents of Children in  
Child Care Facilities*

A publication of the  
Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Early Childhood Development  
Office of Child Care

[www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/child\\_care.htm](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/child_care.htm)

**There are certain requirements that apply only to homes or centers.**

### **Family Child Care Homes**

- Up to 8 children may be in care at the same time if the home meets certain physical requirements. No more than 2 children under the age of two, including the caregiver's own, may be in care at the same time unless the home has been approved to serve additional children in this age group and an additional adult is present. Under no circumstance may care be provided at the same time to more than 4 children under the age of two.
- Each applicant for a family child care license must:
  - Have a criminal background check and child abuse/neglect clearance;
  - Submit a recent medical evaluation; and
  - Complete pre-service training requirements,

The director and all paid center employees must complete a criminal background check and a child abuse/neglect clearance, and submit a medical evaluation.

- In each classroom, staff/child ratios and maximum group size requirements must be maintained at all times. The following table shows some basic age groupings and the applicable requirements:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Maximum Size</u>
0 – 18 months	1:3	6
18 – 24 months	1:3	9
2 years	1:6	12
3 – 4 years	1:10	20
5 years or older	1:15	30