



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Guidance Related to Coronavirus (COVID-19): Child Care Licensing and Compliance (March 1, 2021)

Background

As part of the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is sharing guidance regarding compliance with child care licensing regulations and requirements during the current public health emergency.

Scope

This document contains updated guidance regarding compliance with child care licensing requirements during the District's modified operating status due to public health actions.

Date Issued

This guidance was issued on **March 1, 2021**, and will remain in effect until further notice. Updated sections will be noted as such.

Guidance

License Inspections (Updated)

OSSE DEL's Licensing and Compliance unit is currently conducting all types of licensing inspections for child care facilities in the District of Columbia. This includes initial, unannounced monitoring, annual, renewal, validation visits and follow up inspections. If you have outstanding deficiencies from prior inspections, please continue to submit documents and pictures to your licensing specialist to the extent that you are able. All compliance activities are moving forward, including:

- Corrective Action Plans;
- Deficiency Correction;
- Immunization compliance;
- Fire renewals; and
- Any other outstanding matters as determined and communicated by your OSSE licensing specialist.

If your facility is open and serving children, fire inspectors and licensing staff must be permitted to enter the facility for required life safety and licensing inspections. Fire inspectors and licensing staff meet the definition of essential visitors included in OSSE's Health and Safety Guidance for child care providers.

Existing Licenses (Updated)

Expiring Licenses

In the event your license is expired or will be expiring, you must submit a renewal application no later than 90 days before expiration date of the existing license. The application must include the required

documents and the provider must actively participate in the renewal process. A new license will not be issued until the renewal process is complete and all fees are paid.

Facilities that are in the renewal process and are open and operating must correct all deficiencies issued within 90 days of the renewal inspection date or a restricted license will be issued until the deficiencies are corrected.

Restricted Licenses:

If you have a restricted license and have not abated deficiencies, you must abate deficiencies if your facility is open and serving families. If your facility remains closed, the restricted license will be automatically extended for 90 days from the date of the expired restricted license, or until you have abated the required deficiencies, whichever is sooner.

Initial Licenses:

If you have received all inspections, abated all deficiencies, submitted complete payment and all required documentation for an initial license, your license will be issued electronically.

License Applications and Payments:

If you have submitted a licensing application and have not completed the process, please work with your assigned license specialist to complete the process.

License applications and payments for renewals, amendments and new licenses must be submitted via US mail to:

Licensing and Compliance Unit
1050 First St. NE, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

If you have questions about your license, please contact your assigned licensing specialist or Clement Idun at Clement.Idun@dc.gov or (202) 442-4733.

Complaint and Unusual Incident Report (UIR) Investigations (Updated)

Complaints:

Complaints that are received alleging imminent danger will be investigated within 24 hours. All other investigations will be conducted virtually and in-person as needed. Complaint disposition documents will be issued electronically through your facility profile in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT).

Unusual Incident Report (UIR):

Please continue to submit unusual incident reports as required to osse.childcarecomplaints@dc.gov and your Education Service Monitor (if applicable).

Criminal Background Checks (Updated)

Please be advised that all criminal background checks are federally required and will be processed without delay. Expiring background checks must be renewed on time. If your facility has staff currently working with expired criminal background checks, they must submit new fingerprints and a Child Protection Register application to continue to work. Those staff may work only after the renewal

information is submitted to Field Print and the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), and they must be supervised by an individual who has a current unexpired criminal background check until a new suitability determination is received.

Fingerprints:

Processing of criminal background checks through Field Print will continue without interruption. Professionals should continue to complete the criminal background check (CBC) process using Field Print. [Read more information here.](#)

Child Protection Register:

Professionals can visit the Child and Family Services Agency website at www.CFSA.dc.gov to review the new online child protection registry (CPR) application submission process. Once OSSE receives the CBC and the CPR, the suitability letters will be emailed to the child care providers. (Remember: child care providers should upload the child protection registry clearance result to the compliance section of DELLT's Facility Profile).

If you have questions about criminal background checks, please contact Carolyn Taylor at Carolyn.Taylor@dc.gov or (202) 727-8140.

Potential Exposure and COVID-19 Reporting (Updated)

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a child, staff member, or essential visitor, child care providers must complete the following steps as soon as possible on the same day the case was reported to the facility:

- File an Unusual Incident Report (UIR) with OSSE at OSSE.ChildCareComplaints@dc.gov and
- Notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website: dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements.
 - Submit a Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form.

Only notify DC Health for a confirmed COVID-19 case, not before results come back. An investigator from DC Health will follow-up within 24 hours to all appropriately submitted notifications. Please note this time may increase if cases of COVID-19 increase in the District.

Please refer to [OSSE's current Health and Safety Guidance for Child Care Providers](#) for complete details on exposure and reporting procedures.

Questions?

If you have questions relating to this guidance please contact Eva Laguerre, director, licensing and compliance, at (202) 741-5942 or Eva.Laguerre@dc.gov.

Related Regulations

- CCDBG Act and its implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. Parts 98 and 99, as administered by the Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services;
- District of Columbia's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan, current version;
- Child Development Facilities Regulation Act of 1998, effective April 13, 1999 (DC Law 12-215; DC Official Code §§ 7-2031 *et seq.* (2012 Repl. & 2017 Supp.)) ("Facilities Act");

- Day Care Policy Act of 1979, effective September 19, 1979 (DC Law 3-16; DC Official Code §§ 4-401 *et seq.* (2012 Repl. & 2017 Supp.)) (“Day Care Act”)
- Chapter 1 of Title 5A of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (5A DCMR § 100 *et seq.*)