



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

**EDUCATION**

## **New Education Requirements for Child Development Staff Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Families**

### **Overview:**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is committed to increasing access to quality, affordable child care in the District of Columbia (DC). As part of this commitment, OSSE recently increased the minimum education requirements for the early childhood workforce in DC. This includes center directors, teachers, assistant teachers, and caregivers in licensed family child development homes.

To support implementation of these new requirements, OSSE expanded funding and resources for scholarships to ensure our current and prospective early childhood workforce have the tools they need to meet these new educational requirements. Child development staff, including center directors, teachers, assistant teachers, home caregivers, associate home caregivers, and expanded home caregivers can access information about the new early childhood education requirements and find resources to support their educational needs at <https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources>.

For information about licensed child care in DC, visit My Child Care DC at [mychildcaredc.org](http://mychildcaredc.org) or contact OSSE's Licensing and Compliance Unit at (202) 727-1839 or [osse.delcommunications@dc.gov](mailto:osse.delcommunications@dc.gov).

### **Licensing Regulations**

#### **1. What does it mean when someone says, "OSSE set new regulations for licensed child development facilities"?**

OSSE is the lead agency for the federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the law which requires states to establish regulations for licensed child care. In Nov. 2014, Congress reauthorized CCDBG for the first time in 18 years. This reauthorization required states to change their regulations to ensure alignment with federal law. In Dec. 2016, OSSE publicized new regulations for child development facilities. A summary and overview of the final rulemaking can be found [here](#).

#### **2. What is the purpose of the new regulations?**

The purpose of the final regulations is to ensure that care provided in a licensed child development facility in the District is safe and supports children's healthy development, future academic achievement, and success by establishing the minimum requirements necessary to protect the health, safety, welfare, and ensure positive development of children in care.

#### **3. How did OSSE pass these new regulations in the District of Columbia?**

OSSE's new licensing regulations were written by a team of local and national early childhood experts. The regulations were posted for a 30-day public comment in Dec. 2015 and an updated version was posted for another 30-day public comment period in Oct. 2016. A final version of the regulations were publicized and posted on Dec. 2, 2016.

**4. Did OSSE make any changes from the public’s opinions and concerns?**

OSSE made changes based on feedback given by the public. OSSE appreciates that many public stakeholders had an interest in the proposed rulemaking and submitted their comments during the two public comment periods. OSSE has reviewed and thoroughly considered all comments received and made changes accordingly and these comments and changes are codified in the Preamble of the Child Development Facilities regulations which can be accessed [here](#).

**5. What information did OSSE use to make the change?**

The recommendation to increase staff requirements is based on the evolution of the investments DC has made in higher education. The recommendations came from many sources. In particular, the new regulations align with recommendations produced with the expertise of researchers, physicians, and practitioners set forth in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*, this publication can be found at <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm>.

**6. Where can I find more details on the regulations and stay informed of changes?**

All regulations and policies regarding licensed child development facilities can be found at <https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources>. Additionally, all proposed changes are posted on this website. Parents may find the overview and summary document [here](#).

**Education Requirements and Supports for the Early Childhood Workforce**

**7. What are the new regulations around qualifications for my child’s teacher and director?**

The change to education requirements affects directors, teachers, assistant teachers, and child development home providers across the District. Table 1 below outlines these requirements and the dates they take effect.

**8. When did OSSE release the new education requirements?**

The final regulations for child development facilities (centers and homes) in DC were published in Dec. 2016.

**9. When does someone have to meet the new education requirements?**

The timelines for child development facility staff to meet the new requirements varies depending on position. Please see Table 1 for the specific deadlines for each position type.

**Table 1. Requirements for Child Development Facility Staff**

	<b>Position</b>	<b>Degree/Credential</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
<b>Center-Based</b>	Director	Bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or a bachelor’s with at least 15 semester credit hours in early childhood	Dec. 2022
	Teacher	Associate’s degree in early childhood education or an associate’s with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood	Dec. 2023
	Assistant Teacher	Child Development Associate (CDA)	Dec. 2020
<b>Home-Based</b>	Home Caregiver and Associate Caregiver	Child Development Associate (CDA)	Dec. 2020
	Expanded Home Caregiver	Associate’s degree in early childhood education or an associate’s with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood	Dec. 2019

**10. Do teachers of infants and toddlers need credentials or degrees?**

Yes, all lead teachers will need an Associate’s Degree by Dec. 2023 and assistant teachers will need a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential by Dec. 2020. The research is definitive that the first three years of life are the most rapid and critical period of development for a child’s brain. We know that high-quality early childhood experiences help children prepare for school and have lifelong, positive effects. We also know that teacher qualifications have an impact on quality.

**11. What support do you have for the workforce to meet this requirement? Will teachers receive higher compensation?**

OSSE provides funding to support in-person courses that are required for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. We offer CDA instruction through grant programs or through a new free, online option – Quorum. In addition, DC provides funding through multiple scholarship programs so our teachers can return to school at little to no cost. More can be found at <https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources>.

**Other Questions**

**12. How will this affect the cost of my child’s care?**

OSSE recognizes that child care in DC, as in many places across the country, is a major expense for families. To meet the demand for child care, Mayor Bowser has invested \$9 million to expand infant and toddler slots in the city by 1,000 over the next three years. OSSE is committed to understanding the effects of these new regulations and in 2018; OSSE will commission an independent and comprehensive study to analyze the effects of the education regulations on the workforce and child development providers.

**13. How do these changes align to national accreditation like the National Association for Young Children (NAEYC)?**

OSSE's regulations require that all persons filling the various staff positions meet the set individual minimum education requirements. NAEYC requires that a percentage the total staff in each position have the same minimum education requirements. NAEYC accreditation requires that center director's hold a bachelor's degree with 24 credits in early childhood education or a related field and nine credits in management. In addition, NAEYC requires a percentage of teachers in a program have an associate's degree and assistant teachers have a CDA credential. This requirement varies based on the size of the program. More information can be found on NAEYC's website: <https://www.naeyc.org/academy/>.