

Child Safety Requirements in Child Care Facilities, Local Board of Education Child Care, and Municipal Youth Camps

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Issue

This report provides information on first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) requirements and frequency of staff trainings for these safety measures in:

1. community child care centers/home child care,
2. board of education childcare programs, and
3. municipal camp programs.

Summary

Child program safety requirements, such as requiring staff to be trained in first aid and CPR, vary in Connecticut depending upon the program setting. Child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, local school district child care programs, and municipal youth camps each are treated differently under the law. Some of these programs must be licensed by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) (child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes) and thus meet their licensing standards. Others are specifically exempted from licensing (local school district child care programs and municipal youth camps) but meet standards that may be set by the individual school board or town ([CGS §§ 19a-77\(b\)\(1\) and -420](#)).

Additionally, exempt programs are required to meet certain safety standards if they accept children whose families receive a public subsidy (Care 4 Kids) to help pay for the child's participation in the program.

This report details the minimum required child safety standards for each program in each setting focusing on first aid, CPR, and related issues. (Although there are other safety areas touched on, this report should not be considered comprehensive for all health and safety matters.)

Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes, and Family Child Care Homes

By law, there are three types of licensed child care facilities based on the number of children they serve. The definitions are as follows:

1. **Child care centers** offer or provide supplementary care to more than 12 children (related or unrelated) outside their own homes on a regular basis ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(1\)](#)).
2. **Group child care homes** (1) offer or provide supplementary care to between seven and 12 children (related or unrelated) on a regular basis or (2) meet the family child care home definition, except that they do not operate in a private family home ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(2\)](#)).
3. **Family child care homes** are private family homes caring for (1) up to six children or (2) up to nine children with an OEC approved assistant or substitute staff member, including the provider's own children not in school full time, where a child is cared for between three and 12 hours per day on a regular basis. During the regular school year, up to three more children who are in school full-time are allowed without the need of an OEC-approved staff member (except in the case of a provider with more than three of their own children, all of the children are permitted) ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(3\)](#)).

Table 1 below details the first aid and CPR requirements for licensed child care facilities.

Table 1: Licensed Child Care Centers and Child Care Homes First Aid and CPR Requirements

First Aid/CPR Requirements for Staff	Certification and Training Requirements	Citation
Child Care Centers and Group Child Care Homes		
At least one staff member present with current first aid and CPR certification	Certification Certification (good for two years) from an organization named in law or regulations and based on staff person's hands-on demonstration of ability to provide first aid and CPR Organizations include: the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, the National Safety Council, and Health and Safety Institute Training Center or home must maintain written verification of: Within three months of hire each new staffer must complete health and safety training in accord with federal regulations, includes pediatric first aid and CPR; plus a host of additional topics including: prevention and control of infectious diseases (immunizations); sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) prevention; medication administration; response to food and allergic reaction emergencies; building and physical premises safety; child maltreatment, prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or other event; recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; domains of child development (cognitive, social, emotional, and physical) Annual training required equal to at least 1% of the total hours worked in same safety procedures listed above including CPR	CGS § 19a-79 Conn. Agency Regs., § 19a-79-4a(f) & (h) 45 CFR 98.41(a)(1)(i) to -a(1)(xi)

Table 1 (continued)

First Aid/CPR Requirements for Staff	Certification and Training Requirements	Citation
Family Child Care Homes		
Applicant/Provider • Current certification in first aid from one of a list of specific organizations named above • CPR certification based on hands-on demonstration of the applicant's ability to provide first aid and CPR	Applications for licensure must include verification of the applicant's current certification in first aid and CPR Must maintain current certifications and keep written verification of the certifications on file at the child care home (certifications good for two years)	Conn. Agency Regs., § 19a-87b-6(c)
Substitutes • Must meet all the First Aid/CPR requirements of an applicant/provider (see above) • Must be at least 20 years old	Must meet all the training requirements of an applicant/provider (see above)	Conn. Agency Regs., § 19a-87b-8
Assistants • Not required to meet the applicant/provider First Aid/CPR requirements but can only work while assisting a provider or substitute who is present	• Not required to meet the applicant/provider training requirements, but can only work while assisting a provider or substitute who is present • Meets the other non-training requirements (awareness of regulations, personal health, at least three references, and commissioner's review of references, and medical, criminal, and sex offender records)	
Emergency caregivers • Not required to meet the applicant/provider First Aid/CPR requirements • Each provider/applicant must identify at least one • Must be at least 20 years old	• Not required to meet the applicant/provider training requirements • Must be on call to provide care for unforeseen emergencies • Commissioner can disallow an emergency caregiver who had a family child care home licensed revoked or denied or who has a substantiated abuse or neglect complaint against them or who had been convicted of a crime the commissioner determines would put children at risk	

License Exempt Childcare and Youth Programs

By law, child care programs administered by a public school system or a municipal agency or department are exempt from state OEC licensing requirements (the legal exemption also includes other groups including those administered by (1) a nationally chartered boys' and girls' club; (2) a religious institution exclusively for children whose parents or guardians are members of the religious institution; and (3) several specifically named local non-profit organizations, among others) ([CGS § 19a-77\(b\)](#)).

The law exempts municipal youth day camps from OEC licensing. It also exempts certain programs from the camp definition, including (1) summer educational programs run by public or private schools and (2) drop-in programs administered by nationally chartered boys' and girls' club for children who are at least six years old, among others ([CGS § 19a-420](#)).

State Safety Requirements for License-Exempt Child Care Providers and Camp Programs

OEC indicates that when license-exempt programs (1) charge a fee and (2) the participating families are in the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy program for low-income families, then the license-exempt programs must meet certain federal safety requirements that are attached to the federal funding Connecticut receives for Care 4 Kids (the program is supported with a mix of state and federal funds). The most recent OEC annual report on the Status of Early Care and Education in Connecticut states that of the 6,299 Care 4 Kids providers in the state, 96 are license exempt.

Requirements for Both Child Care Providers and Camp Programs. All license-exempt programs administered by public or private schools or municipalities (school-year and summer) who receive Care 4 Kids funding are required to pass an annual OEC health and safety inspection, according to OEC's Licensing Division.

In addition to the state requirements for child care and youth day camps, school districts and municipal parks and recreation departments have their own requirements determined at the local level. These local requirements are not included in this report.

License-Exempt Child Care. The OEC requirements for license-exempt child care program operators require new staff to participate in employee orientation and for all current staff to participate in annual training on the program's policies, plans, and procedures. Staff must complete training equal to at least 1% of the total annual hours worked and the operator must maintain records of the trainings.

At least one training must include a health and safety topic as detailed in federal regulations, these include: pediatric first aid and CPR, prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations); SIDS prevention; medication administration; response to food and allergic reaction emergencies; building and physical premises safety; child maltreatment, prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or other event; recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and child development (cognitive, social, emotional, and physical) ([45 CFR 98.41\(a\)\(1\)\(i\) to -a\(1\)\(xi\)](#)).

While there is no requirement for staff to be trained in First Aid, CPR, or medication administration, untrained staff must complete all required topics of the online OEC Health and Safety Training. This includes:

1. preventing the spread of infectious diseases,
2. recognizing signs and symptoms of illness,
3. maintaining a clean environment,
4. reducing exposure to bloodborne pathogens, and
5. medication administration for non-certified staff.

For staff who are certified in First Aid, CPR, or medication administration, they only have to complete selected parts of the OEC online Health and Safety Training.

If a program chooses to have staff do medication administration, the program must have written policies and procedures for medication administration and ensure trained staff are present whenever a child with medication orders is enrolled and on-site.

The staff ratio must be at least one staff to 10 children ages 3 to 5 and one staff to 15 children for ages 5 to 12, according to the OEC requirements. During nap time, when all the children in the group are sleeping, the overall staff must be maintained on the premises.

There are overall OEC requirements are more far-ranging than the selected items included above with additional requirements addressing aspects of administration, staffing, record keeping, physical plant and program practices, and infant and toddler programs.

License-Exempt Municipal Camps. OEC requires the operator to implement specific written policies, plans, and procedures for a youth camp program that cover child abuse and neglect

including (1) recognizing the signs of maltreatment and (2) procedures in case of illness and emergencies. The operator must require new staff to participate in employee orientation and current staff to participate in annual training on the youth camp policies. The requirement does not specifically include pediatric first aid and CPR or the health-related topics that are included for child care programs (see above). Due to the short season when they operate, youth camps are not required to complete the online Health and Safety Training or the level of annual trainings in health and safety topics as detailed in federal regulations mentioned above for child care programs.

The youth camp must maintain documentation of trainings for each program staff member.

As with child care, the OEC requirements are more far-ranging than the selected items included above with additional requirements addressing aspects of administration, staffing, record keeping, and physical plant and program practices.

Safety Requirements Set by School Districts and Municipalities. When the legislature last year considered [SB 6](#), which would have brought all municipal youth day camps under OEC licensure, various town officials testified at the bill's public hearing that their own standards met OEC standards. For example, the Rocky Hill parks and recreation director submitted [testimony](#) that all summer camp staff in the parks and recreation program camp participate in mandated reporter training (regardless of age), are CPR/first aid/automated external defibrillator certified, and all staff age 18 and older are certified to administer medications. Other municipal officials made similar statements. Other testimony on the bill can be found [here](#).

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