

# Overview of New Regulations for Children's Center Effective April 1, 2020

The Licensing Regulations Governing Pinellas County Children's Centers, April 1, 2020, are available for download from [www.pclb.org](http://www.pclb.org). Please take the time to read them. The new regulations reflect the state standards set forth in 65C-22.001, and the Child Care Facility Handbook, December 2019.

Some of the significant regulation additions/changes are detailed below. In addition, we have updated our center forms at [pclb.org](http://pclb.org) to include a sample Daily Indoor Daily Checklist. This is only a sample, it is not a required form; it is designed to help meet compliance.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Updates Fall/Use Zones, Immediate, Unitary Surface Materials, Professional Contribution, College Degree, Classroom/Room/Designated Space

## **PERSONNEL:**

Adds information about the National FBI Fingerprint File Program, clarifies timeframe for staff being added to the Clearinghouse roster.

Explains that child care personnel with a 90 or more day break in service are considered unscreened and cannot be left alone with children until they are re-screened and the results are on file in their personnel file.

Documentation of the hours a director works at a program must be available for review by CCLP.

Clarifies that training taken prior to working in a Florida licensed child care program does not count as a "beginning of training". The staff member has 90 days from when they begin working in a Florida licensed child care program to begin training. **(Make sure to do a very careful employment history check to make sure that a potential employee has not worked in a Florida licensed child care for even 1 day – if they have, their "clock has started ticking" for the 90 day start. If they took courses in high school or college, or for some other reason, and have never truly worked in a Florida licensed child care program, then they have 90 days from their start with you to start training)**

Staff have 30 days to be trained on fire extinguisher training and must show that they have been trained at each school age center at which they are employed. **(Staff need to be trained on location of how to use fire extinguishers-not transferrable from site to site, as locations and type of extinguisher could/would be different)**

Explains that any trainings being used to satisfy the DCF Clock hours that are not given by DCF must be uploaded to the Florida Pathways (Registry) **(Any trainings that are taken through Early Learning Florida to satisfy DCF requirements, or through a National Organization, must be uploaded to the Florida Pathways – contact 1-888-352-2842 for assistance with this)**

All child care personnel that participate in transporting children must complete Transportation training prior to participating in transportation. They must either take **DCF's Transportation Safety Course** or the **Early**

**Learning Florida Precautions in Transporting Children** course. If they are currently employed, they have 90 days for April 1, 2019 to complete this training. It must show as “in-service” if it is the DCF training or show on the OEL part of the DCF transcript. Does not apply to walking field trips but does apply to any child care personnel who are on the vehicle, not just the driver and the second sweeper, but teachers who potentially could be involved in a field trip should take the training as well.

#### **SUPERVISION:**

For any swimming pool used, providers must ensure current permit with the local health department confirms compliance with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. Also documentation of staff education for pool rescue equipment must be maintained in the staff’s personnel file. **(If you go swimming, have in staff files what date and on what equipment they were educated)**

#### **DISCIPLINE**

For children’s centers with children under 1, there must be a **written policy and procedure to identify and prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma**. This policy should include the completion of Safe Sleep Training for all staff. **(Should reinforce to staff that they should ask for a break when they sense they are becoming frustrated so as not to injure a baby)**

#### **RECORDS:**

Written records of fire drills must be maintained for 12 months.

Accident/incident reports must be maintained for 12 months from the date of the accident/incident

Emergency preparedness drill documentation must be maintained for 12 months from each drill.

Daily meal and snack menus must be maintained for a minimum of 12 months

Emergency care plans must be maintained for as long as the child is in care.

Daily indoor inspection logs must be maintained for 12 months.

Documentation of compliance with ASTM 1292 for unitary surface materials must be available for review, if applicable. **(This can be obtained from the manufacturer or the installer)**

If a staff member has been trained to administer medication, evidence of that training must be maintained in their personnel file. **(Make a form, or copy the bottom of the medication form showing the name of the staff, what medication they were trained to administer, by whom and on what date.)**

Electronic records are acceptable as long as they can be accessed.

#### **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

In April and September each year, the facility must provide parents with information regarding the potential for distracted drivers to fail to drop off a child at the facility and leave them in their vehicle at the adult’s destination. There is a brochure that is posted on our website that allows for a tear off sheet, just like the influenza brochure. This tear off page should be kept in the child’s file. **(Be sure that this is done only in the months of September and April. The tear off forms should be clearly dated and the child’s name should be legible as well)**

Documentation that parents/guardians have received the “Know your Child’s Children’s Center” brochure, food and nutrition policies, Influenza Virus Guide and Distracted Adult brochure must be available for review by the CCLP.

If an Emergency Care Plan is necessary, it must be prepared by the parent/guardian or physician. **(If a child has a medical or behavioral condition or an allergy and they are transported, make sure that the parent or a physician completes the Emergency Care Plan. There is a sample form on our website. A staff person must be trained on the administration of the medication, and what signs to look for that would require the medication to be given.)**

#### **DAILY ATTENDANCE**

Attendance sheets must accompany child care personnel and the group of children on that attendance sheet throughout the day, even if they go outdoors, or on an emergency drill.

If children are being picked up from a school day program, or are to arrive by city bus, walking, or an outside transportation service, child care personnel must communicate IMMEDIATELY with the parent/guardian if there was no prior communication that the child would not be present that day. They must reach or leave a message with the parent/guardian. If they cannot do either, they must notify emergency contact, and all of this must be documented. **(Develop a system so that staff know who they are supposed to be picking up or receiving at the children’s center, and if they are not there, with no prior notice, parents are contacted right away – set up guidelines for what Immediate means -DCF says no passage of time, so there should not be a gap in time. Document when the call(s) were made).**

#### **FIRE SAFETY**

A current attendance record and parent contact information must accompany staff out of the building during the drill or actual evacuation and be used to account for all children. **(Again, use the Emergency Medical Release Form or list of parents/guardians with contact info)**

#### **OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT**

There must be a suitable amount of equipment that is age appropriate so that each child can be involved in an activity.

Open containers that can collect water must be emptied immediately after use.

All types of ground cover must be maintained to provide resilience in fall/use zones. If it is a loose ground cover, it must be a minimum of six inches in depth. If it is a unitary surface it must meet the ASTM 1292 requirements.

Fall/use zones must be six feet around. **(Six inches of resilient surface must be at least six feet around equipment that would have a fall/use zone. This would include climbing equipment, swings, or any piece of equipment that a child could fall off)**

If the play area was approved, prior to these requirements, and they cannot be met, the program may submit a written request to operate using the prior approved play space within 90 days of the effective date of this rule in order not to meet the six foot fall/use zone requirement. **(Please see regulations for requirements of what must be sent with this request.)**

Manufacturer instructions must be kept on file for equipment purchased or installed after February 26, 2020.

Wading pools, including inflatable water slides with a landing area where water collects are not to be used for water activities. Wading pools may be used for other activities, but not for water play. No child should sit in any water that does not continuously flow.

## **INDOOR EQUIPMENT**

Equipment must be anchored and stable to prevent tipping.

There must be a written routine schedule for cleaning and sanitizing or disinfecting equipment, materials, furnishings and play areas. Include daily, weekly and monthly tasks. This must be available for review by CCLP. **(Determine what needs to be cleaned daily and weekly and post a cleaning schedule – it does not need to be a checklist – just a schedule – your licensing specialist will be able to determine if the schedule is being followed by the cleanliness of the equipment and furnishings)**

Moveable or non-stationary indoor climbing structures require padding for landing. Permanently installed playground equipment that is installed indoors must meet the same requirements as outlined in the Outdoor Equipment section.

## **SAFETY, HEALTH AND SANITATION**

No drug paraphernalia may be on site.

Add VAPING to the NO SMOKING, E-CIGARETTE signage or information given to parents. **(Make sure that your signage is updated or if this information is transmitted through a parent handbook that it is updated and there is evidence that the parents received the new wording)**

Sink/water fountain combinations cannot be used as a handwashing sink after toileting. If you want to continue to use, there is language you must sign and agree to.

No poisonous, venomous, or aggressive animals are allowed on the premises. Parents must be notified in writing of all animals on the premises. Current vaccinations, if applicable, must be available for review by CCLP. If animals or birds are kept in cages they must be kept away from the food storage or preparation area.

By December 31, 2021, there are guidelines based on number of staff in ratio to provide direct supervision. For right now, we are not monitoring for this standard. **(This supersedes any previous deadline for staff trainings for first aid and CPR. Right now, one person on site and one person on a field trip and all drivers must have first aid and pediatric CPR training)**

Handwashing signs posted at every sink must include situations and times that handwashing is required; the situations must be from CDC guidelines, and a poster is available from the CDC website that if hung, satisfies this requirement. **(Please use the link and find the CDC sign that has a picture of a gentleman and a list of when handwashing should be done – this will satisfy this newly worded requirement)**

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND NOTIFICATIONS**

If you chose to use a generator it must have a power source permanently installed and maintained according to code.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL**

Child care programs need a written **exposure plan regarding universal safety precautions**. Personnel are required to be educated on the plan prior to working and annual thereafter. Written documentation that child care personnel have participated in the annual refresher education must be retained for 12 months and

available for review by CCLP. **(Visit the CDC website to find out what should be contained in an exposure plan about universal safety precautions, if there is exposure to blood or other bodily fluids. Write up what your safety precaution plan is, go over it with staff, be able to show it to your licensing specialist, and make sure that child care personnel review it on or before hire and then receive a refresher before a year is up. Create certificates/sign-in sheets for agendas, etc. that are dated so it is evident when the initial training and refresher trainings have been completed)**

## **TRANSPORTATION**

There are very specific instructions for using and completing the TRANSPORTATION LOG for both walking and vehicle trips. **(Please ensure that all staff involved in transportation is aware of the importance of completing these logs accurately.)**

Child Care personnel must have possession of contact information for the parent or legal guardian of each Child being transported by vehicle or on foot while away from the child care facility. **(Make copies of Emergency Medical Release Forms and make sure staff has them with them, not just on field trips or other transportation activities, but when there are emergency drills as well)**

Emergency Care Plans should be on file for children not just with illnesses but with allergies who are transported.

Vehicles must be maintained between 65 and 82 degrees while in use. **(This can be done through air conditioning or open windows – does not have to be in temperature when parked and children are not on the vehicle.)**

## **FOOD AND NUTRITON**

Meals and snacks must contain, at a minimum, the meal and snack patterns shown for school-age children in the Child Care Food Program Meal Pattern for Children.

Formula may only be kept now for 24 hours – no longer 48 hours.

There must be an accurate thermometer in every refrigerator and freezer used to store food for the program. The thermometer must be located in the center of the unit and be readily accessible. Refrigerators should read no higher than 41 degrees and freezers no higher than 0 degrees.

This is just an overview. All new regulations are highlighted in yellow on our website. In most cases, the regulations for Children's Centers were updated to match those that went into effect for School Age Centers in October, 2019. In many instances, there is clean-up language to insert items left out in the last update in 2018. In some cases, the new Children's Centers Regulations are truly new. It is important that you read these regulations carefully and train your staff in order that they can maintain compliance.

We look forward to partnering with you to help you to be successful. If you have any questions, please contact your licensing specialist.