

Overview of New Regulations for Children's Center Effective April 2, 2018

Enclosed are the Licensing Regulations Governing Pinellas County Children's Centers, April 2018. They are also available for download from www.pclb.org. Please take the time to read them. The new regulations reflect the state standards set forth in 65C-22, and the Child Care Facility Handbook, October, 2017, and were approved by the Pinellas County License Board for incorporation into Licensing Regulations Governing Pinellas County Children's Centers on December 6, 2017.

Some of the significant regulation additions/changes are detailed below. Please review the enclosed regulations for complete changes.

Background Screening:

Puts into Rule the Clearinghouse and 5 year employment history check requirements that have been in place since July 1, 2016. Also changes the Affidavit of Good Moral Character to an Attestation of Good Moral Character.

How to maintain compliance: Continue screening in the Clearinghouse, and obtaining out of state abuse registry and sexual offender results, if applicable. Begin using the Attestation on 4/2/18 for new employees or any employees with a 90 day break in service. (Form can be found on www.pclb.org).

Training:

DAP courses are now 5 hour UDAP and 5 hour DAP, except for Special Needs

Early Literacy and Behavior, Guidance and Discipline can no longer be tested for Part 2.

All staff including substitutes and volunteers who work at children's centers licensed for children under 2 years of age must take training about safe sleep/shaken baby syndrome within 30 days of hire

How to maintain compliance: Have all staff sit through either Health, Safety and Nutrition, the DCF Safe Sleep Course, or the Early Learning Florida Safe Sleep Practices course and keep documentation with date completed in staff files.

Fire Extinguisher Training must be completed within 30 days of hire

How to maintain compliance: Conduct training (director may do) and put certificate or agenda in personnel file with date completed.

Training must be provided by a parent or medical professional to anyone administering medication

How to maintain compliance: Limit to 2 to 3 staff members, and write on the bottom of the medication form that the parent has completed who was trained to administer, by whom, and the date.

Supervision:

No child can be released to someone if their name is not in writing, and the person's identity must be verified through a picture ID.

How to maintain compliance: Make sure parent/guardian lists all people who may pick up their child. If there is a last minute addition, have them fax, email or text the person's name. Keep the documentation. Make a photocopy of picture ID of anyone who is authorized to pickup. Make sure that you check the Child Enrollment Form for completeness of Emergency Contact or Pick-Up people.

If children are not present at the time of a pre-arranged pick-up, child care personnel must verify the whereabouts of the child.

How to maintain compliance: Know who you are picking up from school and don't leave until you are sure you have everyone, or know why a child is not present, i.e. they were absent from school that day.

Water Supervision:

Wading pools are prohibited.

If you use a pool on a field trip it must have a Virginia Graeme Baker drain cover.

During water play activities, the supervising adult must be within arm's length providing "touch supervision". This does apply to water tables.

How to maintain compliance: Do not allow wading pools, check with the pool operator about the drain before schedule a field trip, and position water tables so that staff can be immediately next to them when in use, but still able to supervise the rest of the classroom.

Discipline:

All children's centers must have a discipline and expulsion policy that includes developmentally appropriate practices as well as discipline and intervention procedures that provide specific guidance on what child care personnel should do to prevent and respond to challenging behaviors.

The state now lists many specific actions that cannot be used with children.

How to maintain compliance: Look at your current discipline policy and amend to include the above elements. Make sure that all staff understand the policy and that parent receive it – also send us a copy for your file. Remember to include the words “No child will be subjected to discipline with is severe, humiliating or frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting. Review with your staff so that they truly understand what actions should not be taken. Trainings in this area, especially those that deal with positive behavioral supports are extremely useful. Also, make sure that staff know that they can ask for help if overwhelmed by a situation, rather than letting their good judgement be suspended.

Child Enrollment Form:

Now requires the name, address and phone number of every person authorized to pick up a child, a parental signature that they have received discipline and expulsion policies, a signed statement that child care personnel may have access to child’s records and if an Emergency Care Plan is required, it must be detailed on the form.

How to maintain compliance: Download the Required Child Enrollment Form (11/17) from www.pclb.org and have parents complete it. This form will be looked for starting in August, 2018, to coincide with the new school year.

Immunizations:

Parents must be provided documentation upon enrollment that not all children in care have current immunizations. Also, parents that do not provide a DH680 on their child’s first date of enrollment must provide evidence or Religious or Medical Exemption or an appointment to receive immunizations.

How to maintain compliance: Add this information either in your parent handbook or on a separate sheet of paper and show through parent/guardian signature that this information has been received.

Child Safety:

If a child does not arrive at the program or pick-up location, center must contact parent/legal guardian within one hour of scheduled arrival time, if there was not prior communication. If parent cannot be reached, emergency contact must be notified.

How to maintain compliance: Establish a routine of notification if children have not arrived and document contact with parent/guardian/emergency contact in the child’s file.

During the hours of operation, the children’s center must not be used for any business or purpose unrelated to providing child care that can permit the presence of individuals who do not meet screening or training requirements when children are present. If a children’s center uses an area that is subject to use by persons outside of the program, there must be exclusion controls.

How to maintain compliance: Talk with other users of your space and set up time frames for use and install locks to keep out non-screened and trained individuals from your specific area, except for parents/guardians.

Records:

Must be kept on site for duration of retention time frame

Fire drill log – 2 years

Emergency Preparedness Drill Logs – 2 years

Attendance devices may be used, but attendance records must be kept for one year

Any medication form that says “as needed” needs further information as to what symptoms would warrant administration of the medication.

Sunscreen may only be used with written permission from parent/guardian and manufacturer instructions followed.

Diaper cream and insect repellent may only be utilized with written permission from parent/guardian

How to maintain compliance: Make sure staff is aware of these timeframes and keep permissions forms with sunscreen/diaper creams.

In the event of a serious injury or death, the incident must immediately be reported to licensing. The center must have a written plan for reporting and managing the following types of incidents: Lost or missing child, suspected maltreatment of child, injuries or illness requiring hospitalization or emergency treatment, death of a child or staff member, presence of a threatening individual.

How to maintain compliance” Make up a form and ensure that all staff understand that Director or Staff Member in Charge, in director’s absence, must complete the form notifying licensing immediately if there is a serious incident. Make sure you have as complete information as possible as we are required to pass this information on to Tallahassee.

Physical Environment:

The approved alarm system must be used each time a fire drill is conducted.

How to maintain compliance: Know how to contact fire alarm company to be able to conduct a drill.

Outdoor Play Space/Equipment:

Equipment with metal and dark colored surfaces may not be used when in direct sunlight.

Fencing may not have openings greater than 3 ½ inches

Maintenance must include monthly inspections that are documented and documentation is kept for two years.

Any open container with water must be emptied immediately

Permanent or stationary equipment must have six inches of resilient surface under and in fall zone.

Sandboxes must be covered at the end of the day.

All new playgrounds constructed after 4/2/18 or any new fencing installed on existing playgrounds must have an exit that is remote from the building.

How to maintain compliance: Outdoor play spaces should be checked every morning, before use, and at the end of the day. If there is a secondary exit from the playground, it should not be locked and inaccessible while the play space is in use. If it is locked with a key, the key should be available to personnel to be able to quickly unlock.

Indoor Equipment:

Televisions must be anchored to prevent tipping.

Indoor climbing structure require padding or carpet for landing.

Bath tubs, buckets and other open containers of water must be emptied immediately after use.

How to maintain compliance: Educate staff on these requirements.

Safety, Health and Sanitation:

Providers must notify parents/guardians that e-cigarettes are also prohibited on the premises:

How to maintain compliance: Update signs or parent handbook.

Handwashing guidelines (available from the CDC) must be posted in all food preparation, diapering and toileting areas:

How to maintain compliance: Download from our website, www.pclb.org and post in all required areas

All accessible electrical outlets must be tamper resistant or have safety covers. Strangulation hazards, such as strings or long cords may not be accessible to children. Guardrails or barriers, such as baby gates, must be provided at open sides or stairs, ramps and other walking surfaces from which there is more than a 30 inch vertical distance to fall.

How to maintain compliance: Do a walk-through and look for all of these things, including classroom loft spaces, ramps and stairs to the outside.

Diapering Practices:

No safety straps or harnesses may be used.

Diaper changing procedures must be posted in the changing area and followed

How to maintain compliance: Remove safety straps or harnesses from diaper changing tables. Develop and print diapering procedures that are in line with licensing regulations and post.

Transportation:

A transportation log must be used even when travelling by foot.

Not completing the transportation log completely and accurately is now a STATE CLASS 1 Fine!

How to maintain compliance: A complete explanation of how it is to be completed is on page 69 of the new regulations. Make sure drivers and second signers are completely familiar with how the log is to be used and completed.

Infants:

The use of safety straps is required to prevent children from falling out of high chairs.

Infant seats, swings and bouncers, must be used for short periods of time, no more than 15 to 30 minutes and no more than twice a day

Cribs must be placed away from windows and blinds.

Cribs must have tight fitting sheets, and no excess bedding, which includes bumper pads, hanging mobiles, quilts, comforters, pillows, stuffed animals and cushions.

Cribs, playpens, play yards must not be placed near window blinds, or other window cover that poses a strangulation hazard.

Food for infants must be cut into ¼ inch or smaller pieces; toddlers ½ inch pieces.

Providers must develop and follow procedures for the preparation and storage of expressed breast milk, The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Protocol.

If instructions are not readily available, child care personnel must obtain information on the sanitary handling of breastmilk and formula from the WHO Safe Preparation Storage and Handling of Powdered Infant Formula Guidelines.

How to maintain compliance: Review all of these regulations with your infant/toddler staff. Post them in your infant/toddler classrooms. Download the Breast Feeding Protocol and the WHO Guidelines from our website, www.pclb.org

Please contact your licensing specialist with any questions. We look forward to working with you in successfully implementing these new state regulations.

