

To: Licensed Child Care Provider
From: Reggie Wagner, Deputy Inspector General- Licensing Division
Subject: Federal Changes Affecting License Holders
Date: February 2017

Thank you for your dedication to serving children and families in licensed child care. You play a critical role in the success of the children you care for and we value your commitment to Minnesota's children.

As many of you know, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), a significant source of federal funding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), was reauthorized and signed into law on November 19, 2014. This federal law includes several improvements that will impact families and child care providers in Minnesota.

This letter is intended to make you, as a licensed provider, aware of this federal law that will require changes to Minnesota's licensing requirements. The changes are being proposed in the current legislative session. We had the opportunity to meet with many of you over the past several months to share information about these upcoming changes. Some of the proposed licensing health and safety changes that will impact you are:

- Required annual unannounced inspections of licensed centers and family child care providers
- Enhanced required training topics for all providers
- Required Emergency Preparedness Plans for every child care provider
- Enhanced background checks and a new obligation to renew them every 5 years

We have been working on updating our website to keep you informed. Please see our child care programs page on our Department of Human Services (DHS) Licensing website: <http://www.mn.gov/dhs/licensing/child-care> to get information for licensed centers or licensed family child care providers.

Available on the DHS Licensing website – Videos explaining the Child Care Block Grant changes affecting licensed providers. *DHS has prepared videos about the changes DHS is proposing this legislative session. The videos are available online at <http://www.mn.gov/dhs/licensing/child-care>.*

Emergency planning documents now available for child care providers. The new federal law requires that States address the needs of children, including the need for safe child care for the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor, or a major disaster or emergency. DHS, in partnership with child care providers, parents and guardians, emergency managers, counties, and child advocacy organizations, developed two emergency planning resources. These documents are intended to assist families, child care providers, counties, and state agencies prepare for and respond to emergencies in a way that prioritizes children's health and safety. The two resources are:

- [Minnesota's Statewide Child Care Emergency Plan \(PDF\)](https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7415-ENG) outlines Minnesota's statewide child care emergency plan and addresses the roles and responsibilities for coordination, communication, and support in the event of a disaster or emergency. This is a tool for all who care for children and manage emergencies. It is available online at <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7415-ENG>.

- [Keeping Kids Safe \(PDF\)](#) is a tool to help child care programs prepare for disasters and emergencies such as fire, floods, severe weather, and violent incidents. This resource includes best practices for emergency preparedness and a template to help providers voluntarily create their own “emergency preparedness plan.” It is available online at <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfs/Server/Public/DHS-7414-ENG>.

DHS recommends that providers use Keeping Kids Safe to create their own comprehensive emergency plan, but it is not currently required. If new legislation is enacted in 2017 that requires child care providers to create emergency plans, providers using this revised template will already meet those new requirements; no additional action will be needed to comply with emergency planning requirements.

Learn more about emergency preparedness and these resources in these [Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#), available online at <http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/dhs-291261.pdf>.

For Child Care Assistance Program providers, some changes will take effect in 2017. If you participate in Minnesota’s Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), you may have to comply with some of the changes related to health and safety training even before legislative changes are approved. You will receive information from Child Care Assistance Program staff about those changes.

Additional resources for licensed providers. DHS will continue to provide updated materials and new information. Please bookmark the following websites:

mn.gov/dhs/licensing/child-care
<https://mn.gov/dhs/general-public/background-studies/>
www.parentaware.org
www.developoptoolmn.org

More information about the federal changes is available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/ccdf-reauthorization>.