

Child Care Regulation Information

State Licensed Care ~ Wisconsin law requires that a person must obtain a license to operate a child care business if they care for four or more unrelated children under the age of seven years. Child care licensing regulations require that a child care program must meet minimum health, safety and training regulations.

- **Group Child Care Centers** provide care for 9 or more children at one time. They may serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers and/or school-age children for a full or part day. The number of children and teachers in a class depends on the ages of the children in each group.
- **Family Child Care** providers care for 4 to 8 children in their own home. They may serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers and/or school-age children for a full or part day. The maximum number of children in a family child care varies by the ages of the children present.

The licensing regulations set standards for adequate care to protect children’s health, safety and well-being. Always remember that a child care license does not guarantee quality child care. It assures that the provider has met minimum state regulations at the time of licensing.

County Certified Family Child Care ~ In Wisconsin, county human service departments can certify family child care providers to care for up to 6 children. There are two levels of county certification.

- **Regular certification** requires that a provider complete initial training requirements, but does not require annual or on-going training.
- **Provisional certification** requires no initial, annual, or on-going training.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PROVIDERS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Requirements • TB Test • Criminal Background Checks • Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Training if caring for children birth to 5 years of age • Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Training if caring for children birth to 2 years of age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Site Visit • Site Visit every 1-2 years • Care Giver Background Checks |
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ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY REGULATION TYPE	PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION	REGULAR CERTIFICATION	LICENSED FAMILY	LICENSED GROUP
Additional Health and Safety Requirements			*	*
Written Policies and Procedures			*	*
15-20 hour Certification Course		*		
6-8 hour Family Child Care Course		*	*	
40 hour Early Childhood Course			*	* plus additional courses
10 hour Infant and Toddler Course if caring for children birth to 2 years of age			*	*
15-25 hours of continuing education per year			*	*
Infant/Child CPR Certification with AED			*	*
6 month probationary visit			*	*

Choosing Quality Child Care

Telephone Interview Questions and Tips

Telephone interviewing is a good way to gather some basic information and will give you a feel for the program or provider.

Before calling, consider what time of day it is. Try to call during naptime (generally early afternoon) when providers may have more time to talk with you, rather than during lunch, when they are busy feeding the children.

When you call, introduce yourself, state how you received their name and why you are calling. If it's a group center, ask for the director or someone who would know about openings. Give the provider the name and age of your child and the date when you need care to begin. Ask if it is a good time to ask some questions. Ask your most important questions first, this may help narrow your search more quickly.



Sample Questions

- Do you have any openings?
- Do you have a waiting list?
- What are your hours?
- What are your fees and what does that include?
- When do you expect payment?
- Do you have a backup or substitute when you are not able to provide care?
- How long have you been working with children?
- What training or education have you completed?
- What is the average number of children in a group?
- How many teachers/caregivers will be with my child?
- Can you describe what a typical day would be like for my child?
- How do you handle discipline/guidance?
- Does anyone in the home smoke?
- Do you have any pets? Will the children have contact with them?
- Are there ways that I can be involved in the program?
- When can I visit the program? (Make sure to verify the address and get directions)
- Do you have a website to visit?

Visiting and Interviewing Providers

Call and visit more than one program so that you can compare. Before making your final decision about your child's care, it is essential to take the time to visit the program and interview the providers. Visit the provider more than once and at different times of the day so you can get a good feel for the program. Also, when you are close to making a decision, bring your child along on a visit to see how your child and the provider interact with each other. Trust your instincts when you interview. Any negative feelings are usually a good indicator that the arrangement will not work out.

Please visit the following website to review regulatory history from the previous 2 years:
<http://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov/Search/BasicSearch.aspx>

On this website you can review the facility's licensing and/or certification information including compliance history and enforcement actions. Use the information you find at this site when talking with providers. Ask them to explain any violations and find out what has been done to correct the violation and to prevent it from happening again.

Your Child Care Search

Use the following checklist to measure the quality of each child care center or home you visit.

Location 1	Location 2	Location 3	Standards
			The caregivers are warm, friendly and supportive.
			The caregivers speak to the child at the child's eye level.
			The caregivers are respectful of different cultural values.
			The setting is pleasant, clean and comfortable.
			Children's needs are met quickly, even when things get busy.
			The setting is large enough so children can move freely and safely.
			A balance of quiet/active and indoor/outdoor activities is planned.
			Age appropriate activities are planned and posted.
			Enough clean and safe toys are available to all children.
			Areas are free of hazards (poisons, sharp objects, etc.)
			Emergency numbers are posted.
			Caregivers are trained in CPR, first aid and early childhood development.
			Children are supervised at all times, even when sleeping.
			Good health habits are encouraged with children.
			Illness and emergency policies are available.
			Discipline practices are appropriate and effective.
			Children are comforted when needed.
			Unannounced visits by family are encouraged.
			Children seem happily occupied and relaxed.
			Opportunities for parent/caregiver communication on a daily basis.
			Parent involvement is welcomed and encouraged.
			Program has an emergency plan for when children are sick, injured or lost.
			Playground is inspected regularly for safety.
			Infant/Toddler Considerations:
			Baby-proofed environment (outlets, gates, toys).
			Babies receive warm, cuddling affection.
			Schedules are based on infant's needs, not planned activities.
			The place where diapers are changed is clean.
			Staff is trained in infant/toddler care.
			School Age Considerations:
			Activities are varied and allow freedom to choose.
			Activities are specific to needs of older children.
			Transportation is provided safely.



No Openings-What Are My Options?

You call everyone on the list provided and no one has an opening that can meet your needs, what do you do next? Following are some suggestions:

- Re-contact Childcaring for additional provider information. We may be able to expand the search area or add additional areas to search. This could increase the options available to you. If you have any flexibility with hours or days that care is needed, we could also change those criteria and search the area again.
- Ask if you could visit the program, even if they do not have current openings. You would then be able to know if this is a program you would consider using if an opening became available.
- If you have found a program that you would like to use, ask if you could be placed on a waiting list. Availability can change quickly and an opening may come up unexpectedly.
- Make a short term plan for child care. Contact Childcaring again in a few months to see if new providers may have been added in the areas you are interested in.
- Ask the provider that does not currently have an opening if they know of someone in the area that does have current availability.
- Talk to friends, neighbors and people at your library, church or community center who may have faced the same problems. How did they solve them?
- Discuss your child care needs with your employer and with co-workers. If many of you are having difficulties, your employer needs to know.
- If you know someone that is not currently regulated that may be willing to watch your children, have them contact Childcaring. We can answer questions and offer tips on becoming licensed or certified to provide care.

