How Does a Child Care Program Become Licensed in Ohio?

August 2010
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Types of Child Care and Requirements
Types of child care and requirements

**TYPE B HOME**
1 to 6 children cared for in the provider's personal residence. No more than 3 children may be under 2 years of age. The provider's own children under 6 years of age must be included in the total count. Anyone can operate a Type B Home without a license. However, care for more than 6 children requires a license. Type B homes must be certified by the county department of Job and Family Services if the child care is paid for with public funds.

**TYPE A HOME**
7 to 12 children (or 4 to 12 children if 4 children are under 2 years of age) cared for in the provider's personal residence. The provider's own children under 6 years of age must be included in the total count. Type A homes must be licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

**CHILD CARE CENTER**
13 or more children at one time, 7 to 12 children if not in a personal residence. Child care centers must be licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

**CHILD DAY CAMP**
A program which operates for less than seven hours a day and only during the vacation of the public schools, cares only for school age children, and the program is at least 50% outdoor based. Child day camps must register with the department each year. If child care is paid for with public funds, the camp must also meet American Camping Association Accreditation standards, or be approved by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.
If you are interested in becoming a licensed program (either a Type A child care home or a child care center) please continue to review this information.

If you are interested in becoming a certified Type B child care home, please contact your local County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS). They will be able to assist you in the certification process. Your local CDJFS can be found at the website listed below.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)
Q. **How do I obtain an application?**

A. **After Sept. 1, 2010**, a person wishing to apply for a child care license must take the following steps:

1. Attend the “Session I, How to Start” training that is available through the local Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies.
2. Attend the “Session II, The Plan of Operation Orientation”, review which is offered monthly throughout the five child care licensing field offices in the state.
3. Complete the JFS 01250 “Child Care Plan of Operation” for centers or the JFS 01335 “Type A Home Plan of Operation” and meet with a child care licensing specialist for Session III, “Plan and Form Review”.
4. At the end of Session II, you will receive your training verification number and have the opportunity to complete the initial application for a child care license.

**Prior to Sept. 1, 2010**, persons wishing to apply for a child care license must speak with a child care licensing supervisor or licensing specialist.
Q. Is the application fee due before or after a provisional license is issued?
A. The fee is due at the time the application is filed, which is before the license is issued. The fee is $100 for a child care center and $50 for a type A family child care home.
Q. How long does the initial licensing process take from beginning to receiving a provisional license?

A. The initial process can vary depending on approvals from other agencies, delivery of equipment, staff and administrator requirements and how soon training sessions are completed. Please allow at least 150 days.
Q. Do I need to have approvals such as building, fire and food before I request an application?

A. No, the approvals from other agencies must be on file before the onsite inspection is completed, but they are not required before an application can be submitted.
Q. What’s the difference between my application number and my license number?

A. Your application number will be a 7-digit number (that will begin with 800_ _ _ _) you will receive this number when your application is submitted online.

Your license number will be a 6-digit number that is assigned to you once a license is issued. It will be on your license face and should be included on all documents submitted to the licensing specialist after your program is licensed.
Q. When I look at the rules, what do all the numbers at the top mean?

A. Reading the rule is easier once you understand what each part of the number represents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>5101:2-12-18.1</th>
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<tr>
<td>5101</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Number ²</td>
<td>Chapter Number ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule Number ⁴</td>
<td>Supplemental Rule Number ⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1-The ODJFS agency number is always 5101.
2- The division for child care is always 2.
3- The chapter number for child care CENTER rules is always 12. Type A home rules are Chapter 13.
4- The rule number is the part of the number that will change for each rule. It is the number to be most familiar with as rules are often referenced by this rule number.
5- Only used occasionally, this indicates that it is a rule that deals with topics similar in nature, the rule number will stay the same, but additional supplemental numbers will be added. (Ex.- 5101:2-12-18, 5101:2-12-18.1, 5101:2-12-18.2- all relate to transportation.)
Q. ORC and OAC- What are these?
A. ORC stands for the Ohio Revised Code. These are Ohio laws, it is statute that is passed by the Ohio Legislature. Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) are the rules that are written by the agency to detail how the law will be administered. The rules give you the details of the requirements originally set in law.
Q. Are all staff at the center or type A home required to have a complete file before the program can obtain a provisional license?

A. Yes. A complete file for a child care staff member (ccsm) includes: verification of graduation from high school, 3 references, a medical, a signed Nonconviction Statement, a signed Employee Policy Statement and verification that BCII and FBI criminal background records checks have been requested. Results of the records checks must be reviewed and approved by the administrator prior to the ccsm being left alone with children.
Q. Are there any training requirements before receiving a license?

A. Before an application is offered, the owner/administrator must complete the trainings outlined in FAQ #1. Additionally, there must always be at least one staff person onsite who has completed training in First Aid/Management of Communicable Disease. There must also be at least one person present all hours of operation who are currently certified in CPR and Child Abuse Prevention.
Q. What are the requirements for background checks for owners, administrators and staff?

A. Administrators, owners and residents of type A homes who are 18 years or older, must have the results of their BCII and FBI criminal records checks sent directly to their assigned licensing field office before a provisional license can be issued.

Staff must have BCII and FBI results sent directly to the center or type A home. Results of both must be reviewed and approved before the ccsm has care, custody or control of children.
Q. What is the Plan of Operation?

A. The JFS 01250 is the “Plan of Operation.” This document, which is completed by the administrator serves as the program’s written plan as to how the program will meet the child care licensing rules and law. Type A homes complete the JFS 01335 “Type A Plan of Operation,” which is similar and serves as the written plan for type A homes.
Q. Where can I get funds to help with getting started?
A. Contact your local Resource and Referral agency to see if there are any grants or funds available. You should also check with local service agencies (such as the Lion’s Club, the Elks, The Eagles, Kiwanis, etc.), employers will also sometimes sponsor child care for employees.
Q. Where can I get a copy of the child care rules that I will have to follow?

A. The child care rules for centers can be found at: Child Care Center eManual. The rules for type A homes can be found at: Type A Home eManual.
Q. How long will my license be good for?

A. A child care program is initially issued a “provisional” license which is valid for 6 months. During this time the program will need to demonstrate that they are able to operate in compliance with Ohio’s child care licensing rules and law. If the program is found to be in compliance during their 90 day inspection, then a recommendation for a two year license is made (this includes the original 6 months of the provisional license.) Following the issuance of a full license, the program’s license expires every two years.
Q. I already have two licensed programs with a good licensing compliance history. Do I need to still attend Sessions I, II and III?

A. Programs administrator/owners who already have a licensed program are not required to attend Session I. Program administrators who have worked at a licensed program and have taken Session II within the past 12 months will not be required to attend Session II, as long as there are not ongoing licensing compliance issues. Session III cannot be waived for any program. If you feel you meet the criteria to waive attendance at either Session I or II, speak with your licensing specialist or a licensing supervisor at your local licensing office.
How to Open a Child Care Program in Ohio
There are many resources available to individuals who are interested in starting a child care program, either in your home or a separate building. There is a lot of work that needs to be done before starting the licensing process.

Important topics to cover include:

- assessing the need in the community for a child care program
- developing a business plan, assuring adequate funding is available to cover the start up costs as well as day to day expenses for the first few years
- selecting a location
- defining your program philosophy

If these areas are not appropriately addressed, it is unlikely that the program will be able to succeed.
A good, basic resource to review is available on the website of National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC).

http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/poptopics/startup.pdf

You will also want to print the child care center or type A home licensing rules, read them and determine if you are willing and able to follow them.
The first steps of the licensing process:

☑ Log onto the ODJFS Child Care website at: http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm

On the website you will find the link to start the licensing process. You will need to sign up for the “Child Care Orientation-”How to Start”- Session I” training that is available through each of the R&R’s. This training includes the topics that need to be considered in your planning and pre-development stage. This orientation is valuable in helping possible applicants decide if they are ready and able to proceed.
Once you have completed the orientation session, you will need to participate in the “Plan of Operation Orientation”-Session II. During this class, the licensing specialists will review how to complete the Plan of Operation, rule requirements and where to find resources.

Session III of the training “Plan of Operation and Form Review” will involve an in depth review of your Plan of Operation. This is conducted with the administrator of the program by the licensing specialist. It is also recommended that the owner attend this review.
While you are completing the three training sections, you can also be working on securing the approvals from other agencies that you will need for your facility.

- Zoning
- Building
- Fire
- Food
• Zoning

Many communities have zoning requirements, which need to be cleared with local (city or county) zoning boards. You will need to contact your local governmental body for this information.
**Building**

Inspections are done by the [Ohio Department of Commerce, the Division of Industrial Compliance and Labor](https://www.ohio.gov/ohio-department-of-commerce). You will need to discuss with them, the areas of the building that you are considering using for child care or related services, the ages of the children you plan on caring for and where you will care for children who are 2 ½ yrs and younger. ODJFS will need to receive a copy of your Certificate of Use and Occupancy that the building dept. will issue once your building is approved. Instructions for obtaining this certificate can be found by clicking on [DIC 3019](https://www.ohio.gov/ohio-department-of-commerce).

*Please note you must have a copy of your Certificate of Use and Occupancy to give to your licensing specialist **before** your onsite inspection is completed.*
The facility must be inspected and approved before an onsite inspection by ODJFS can be completed. Contact your local fire official first, as they are the authority having jurisdiction for inspections. If they choose to not conduct the inspection, or are not certified to do the type of inspection your facility needs, the Code Enforcement Bureau fire safety inspector would conduct the inspection.

You will need to discuss with the fire inspector, the areas of the building that you are considering using for child care or related services, the ages of the children you plan on caring for and where you will care for children who are 2 ½ yrs and younger. The inspection and approval must be documented on a JFS 01303 “Fire Inspection Report.”
• **Food**

Your program will need to contact the local health district having authority over the area your program is located. The sanitarian will be able to discuss with you your plans for serving food or for having food supplied by parents or a caterer and what type of licensure is required. You will need to have written approval from the local health district prior to a provisional license being issued.

Even part time programs who only serve snacks need to contact their local health district to find out the food service requirements.
When you have completed Session II of the required trainings you will be able to return to the ODJFS Child Care website access the COLTS-SOLAR webpage and fill in the information required to complete the Child Care Application.
Once the application is submitted the applicant must print a payment voucher and mail the voucher with the required initial application fee.

You must actually hit the “Submit” button for the application to be submitted.

*Do not send your payment and voucher until you have hit the “Submit” button.*
When all inspections and approvals have been received, your Plan of Operation is complete and your facility is ready to operate, your onsite inspection will be scheduled. At this time your facility must be ready as if children were to walk in the next day. (See Initial Onsite Inspection Checklist.)
Checklists to Help You in the Licensing Process
To be a child care center administrator you must have:

- Verification of having completed a high school education **AND** either
- 2 yrs of college (60 semester/90 quarter hrs) with four Child Development (CD) courses (12 semester/18 quarter hrs) **OR**
- 24 months experience in a licensed child care program and a currently valid Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) **OR**
- 24 months experience in a licensed child care program and four CD courses **OR**
- Pre-Kindergarten Associate Certificate **OR**
- Montessori Pre-primary/Early Childhood Credential

(See Rule 5101:2-12-24 for more details.)
Playground Requirements

- Daily outdoor play in suitable weather
- 60 sq feet of usable space per child using the area at one time
- Well defined by a fence or a natural barrier
- Provides a shaded area
- Free of foreign objects and rubbish
- Inspected on a quarterly basis (JFS 01281 – prescribed form)
- Only equipment that is safe and appropriate for the age of children using the play area
- Appropriate fall zones under and around equipment  
  (See Appendix A of Rule 5101:2-12-14)

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</table>

- Inf-Infant 0-18 mo
- Tod- Toddler 18-36 mo
- Pre- Preschooler 3-5 yr
- S/A-Schoolage Child

- **Check this out!**
Required Postings

☑️ In Each Classroom:

- JFS 01310 Required Staff/Child Ratios for Child Care Centers
- JFS 01242 Medical/Dental/General Emergency Plan (in each room and by all phones)
- JFS 01201 Dental First Aid Chart
- Fire/Weather Emergency Plans with diagram for evacuation routes

☑️ Check this out!
Required Postings

☑️ Required to be posted in at least one location in the center or home:

- Current center license
- Licensing inspection/complaint reports for the current licensing period
- Administrator hours of availability
- Fire Drill Record
- Food Service License
- No Smoking sign
- No Weapons sign
- Daily program schedule (for all age groups of children being served)
- ODH Communicable Disease Chart
- Weekly Menus (for all meals and snacks)
Staff Files

- Verification of high school education (*)
- Medical Statement (JFS 01296 – sample form)
- Signed Nonconviction Statement (JFS 01328 – prescribed form)
- Criminal Records Checks (FBI and BCII) Results reviewed and approved by the administrator before left alone with children.
- Three References (from non-relatives)
- Employee Policy Statement (JFS 01246 - prescribed form)
- Copies of any inservice training that staff have completed

* Not required for employees who do not care for children and are not used in the staff/child ratios.
All equipment must be present and set up in the rooms to be used. This would include:

- Equipment present in all categories for each room to be initially used and for each age group
- Storage area for children's personal belongings
- Quiet area designated in each room
- Electrical outlets covered
- Cots assembled
- Cribs assembled and arranged at least two feet apart
- Crib area separated from the play area by a physical barrier
- Diaper changing areas set up ready to use
- Towels, soap by sinks, toilet paper in restrooms
- Sinks and toilets proper height or suitable platform in place
- Outdoor play equipment with appropriate protective ground cover
- Outdoor play equipment securely anchored, unless portable by nature
- Outdoor play area usable and fenced, if applicable
Employee Record Chart is filled out and complete employee files are available for review. (Remember, documentation must be on file to verify coverage in First Aid/Communicable Disease, CPR and Child Abuse Recognition.)

- All construction, interior and exterior must be completed and cleaned up
- Cleaning supplies labeled and properly stored
- Center has a working telephone
- Supplies needed to properly care for an ill child
- First aid kit(s) complete and properly stored

Check this out!
From the Child Care Administrator’s Point of View....
Why Did I Decide To Do This?

Thoughts from Current Child Care Administrators

“I love that I am in a position to offer children a safe program that they will enjoy coming to, which gives parents peace of mind while they are at work.”

Sara, School-Aged Child Care Administrator 11 yrs.

“Because of the difference I can make in each child. I see MANY children that need extra love and attention and it is VERY rewarding to be able to give them just that.”

Angi Rider (Rainbow Station ECP, Reynoldsburg) Admin. 12 yrs.
The Hardest Parts of Being an Administrator...

“When a child is injured while in our care, or there is an unsafe situation that needs to be solved. There is a difficult emotional impact.”

Cathy L, Administrator 30 yrs.

“Knowing I’m responsible for not only my own income but the income of my employees.”

Dina (Homeland Christian Child Care, Grove City)

“Being only one person! Being an admin. Can be hard when you are pulled and stretched in many different directions at once. It is often hard to always think quickly and make the best decision at every given time.”

Jenny Beverly (Ross Cty YMCA CDC, Chillicothe) Administrator 6 ½ yrs.
The Hardest Parts of Being an Administrator...

“Discussing difficult issues with parents regarding their child’s behavior.”
Amy LeClair (Brooksedge Day Care Center, Hilliard) Administrator 5 yrs.

“Finding qualified individuals to work in this type of environment, that are eager to grow, teach, and learn.”
Kris, Administrator 15 yrs.

“Balancing all you would like to do with and for the children and staff while dealing with the great financial changes that have occurred in today's economy.”
Annette Doughty (A+ Child Care and Learning Center, Marysville) Administrator 11 yrs.
“I get to laugh every day.”
Administrator 12 yrs.

“Being part of a committed group of individuals – parents, faculty, community and university- who are all working together on behalf of the children that are a part of our lab school. It’s like a group of gardeners planting a garden together. The result is this amazing, beautiful bouquet of flowers that have started as seeds and grown into beautiful flowers. I get to stand right in the middle of it!.”

Beth Rice (Dr. Miller and Genevieve Toombs Children’s Learning Center at Shawnee State University, Portsmouth) Administrator 15 yrs.

Watching the children during their “aha” moments!

Hollie Queen (Pickaway Co. YMCA Educare & Y-Club, Circleville) Admin. 7 yrs.
The Best Parts...

The ultimate highlight is when children smile, run into my arms, and give me a hug. It makes me feel happy to be a part of their lives.

Jill (KidzLink, Marysville) Administrator 14 yrs.

“Watching the wonder in a young person’s eyes as they discover the world around them and knowing, for many of them, you made it happen.

Sandy Hanson (High Hopes Learning Center, Enon) Administrator 30 yrs.

“Constantly learning, and being able to see so many children smile each and every day!”

Anonymous
Role of the Licensing Specialist
What ODJFS Regulates

**Plant**
- Facility has all approvals and adequate square footage - inside and out
- Safe and sanitary requirements
- Equipment and supplies

**Program**
- Supervision, guidance and care of children
- Nutrition
- Balance of quiet/active play, developmentally appropriate activities

**People**
- Staff/child ratios
- Employee requirements
- Children’s paperwork, incident reports
What You Can Expect from Your Licensing Specialist

- To review your Plan of Operation.
- To assess if your program is meeting the requirements of the licensing rules by doing an onsite inspection before a license is issued.
- To recommend licensing actions to the Director of ODJFS based upon information submitted and observed during the onsite inspection.
- After a license is issued, to monitor the program’s compliance with licensing laws and rules through announced/unannounced inspections and to provide written notification of the findings of these inspections.
- To assist you in developing ways to comply with licensing requirements.
- To investigate any complaints that ODJFS receives on your program and to review those findings with you once the investigation is complete.
- To provide consultation in the areas of nutrition, health, administration, programming and other aspects of child care.
- Welcome any comments, input and recommendations you may have about licensing rules and procedures.
Resources and Links
http://emanuals.odjfs.state.oh.us/emanuals
Child care rules for centers and type A homes, transmittal and procedure letters, forms

http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/inter.asp
ODJFS forms; searchable by form name or number

http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm
Ohio's child care website. Links to forms, rules, child care licensing inspection reports, information on trainings and Ohio’s child care programs.

http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/index.stm
The front page for the Office of Families and Children (OFC) which offers links to all of Ohio’s Protective Services for children and adults.

http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/policies.stm
OFC’s page for Rules and Policy. It offers links to use for: signing up to receive electronic clearance notices, weekly JCARR notices, accessing ORC and OAC as well as federal law governing ODJFS.
http://www.cdc.gov/
The website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This website offers valuable, credible information on many illnesses and prevention methods.

http://www.cpsc.gov/
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: offers information on all items that have had recall notices issued. The playground safety handbook is also available at this site under the “Publications” heading.

http://www.naeyc.org/
The National Association for the Education of Young Children is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and development services for all children from birth thru age eight.

http://www.oaeyc.org
The Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children, “The Voice of Ohio’s Early Childhood Professionals.”
http://nrckids.org/
National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NRC). The NRC’s primary mission is to promote health and safety in out-of-home child care settings throughout the nation. “Caring for Our Children” can be accessed through this site.

www.aap.org/topics.html
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), “dedicated to the health of all children.” Includes links to health resources as well as parent information handouts.

http://www.healthychildcare.org/
Healthy Child Care America, a program of the AAP, offers many resources for early education and child care.

http://playgroundsafety.org/
The National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS) offers training, information and many resources on providing safe play areas for children.
http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/
The National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC), a service of the Child Care Bureau, is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance (TA) center that provides comprehensive child care information resources and TA services to Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Administrators and other key stakeholders.

http://nrckids.org/CFOC/HTMLVersion/TOC.html
Caring for Our Children has been a yardstick for measuring what has been done and what still needs to be done, in the child care field, as well as a technical manual on how to do it.

http://www.zerotothree.org
Zero to Three, is a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in the lives of infants and toddlers.
NACCRA, the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, is the nation's leading voice for child care. They work with more than 700 state and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies nationwide. These agencies help ensure that families in 99 percent of all populated ZIP codes in the United States have access to high-quality, affordable child care. To achieve their mission, they lead projects that increase the quality and availability of child care professionals, undertake research, and advocate child care policies that positively impact the lives of children and families.

Healthy Meals Resource System (HMRS): Providing information to persons working in the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs.

This website is for parents of children who attend child care programs. We hope this guide will meet your needs for current, expert information and lead you to other useful resources.
http://www.aap.org/disasters/child-care.cfm
These resources will be helpful for early education and child care providers, child care health consultants, pediatricians, and others working to strengthen disaster preparedness in child care programs.

What’s under your kitchen sink, in your garage, in your bathroom, and on the shelves in your laundry room? Learn more about what’s in these products, about potential health effects, and about safety and handling.

http://www.childcarelaw.org/about.shtml
The Child Care Law Center (CCLC) is a national nonprofit legal services organization that uses legal tools to make high quality, affordable child care available to every child, every family, and every community.

http://www.ada.gov/childq&a.htm
Commonly asked questions about child care centers and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS
Every year, thousands of children are tragically injured or killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. In fact, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children age 3 and older in the United States. Securing your children properly in age and size appropriate child safety seats — in the back seat of your vehicle — is the most effective thing you can do to protect them in the event of a crash.

http://www.challengingbehavior.org/
The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children, also known as TACSEI, is a five-year grant made possible by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and creates free products and resources to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day.
So... now that you know how a child care program becomes licensed...

Still interested?

First steps to take:

• Review rules and laws and keep a copy of each
• Register and attend Sessions I, II and III
• Develop your business plan
• Contact and secure inspections for Building, Fire & Food

Good luck and remember to use the resources suggested here.