

DATE: December 22, 2011

TO: Licensed Child Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes

FROM: Debra L. Johnson, Chief, Community Based Regulation Section

RE: Physical Plant Requirements Pertaining to Child Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes/ New Department Database/Request for Email Addresses

The purpose of this communication is to inform you of the Department's implementation of the enclosed new policies and procedures that pertain to the physical plant requirements for licensed child day care centers and group day care homes that exclusively serve school age children. These policies and procedures were adopted in accordance with Public Act 10-90 and are the result of collaboration between this Department and the Connecticut After School Network. The provisions of PA 10-90 have allowed the Department to implement these policies and procedures while in the process of adopting such policies and procedures in regulation form. These policies and procedures are now in effect and will remain in effect until the time final regulations are adopted. On December 27, 2011, these policies and procedures will be published in the Connecticut Law Journal and will be made available for public comment. At that time, a copy of the publication and information regarding the public comment period will be made available on the Child Day Care Licensing Program's website at www.ct.gov/dph/daycare under What's New or by calling 1-(800)282-6063. In addition to these changes related to the physical plant requirements, further regulatory changes are being pursued and will also be published in the Connecticut Law Journal in the near future. This notice and the proposed changes will also be made available on the above website at the time of publication.

As you may already know, the Child Day Care Licensing Program recently transitioned to a new licensing system. The new licensing system, known as eLicense, takes advantage of new technology capabilities that will increase efficiency and service quality for licensed providers, researchers, parents, the general public and other interested stakeholders. The new system allows the public to conduct on-line searches of child day care providers and displays basic license and inspection information, substantiated complaint history information and formal discipline history information. Additionally, eLicense enables the public to download rosters of child day care providers, and allows the Department to collect valuable data related to the child day care licensing and monitoring activities. Additional features expected to be implemented in the future include on-line renewal of licenses and posting of routine licensing inspection results on-line.

As we all know, the importance of emergency preparedness has been highlighted by Hurricane Irene and Storm Alfred. In an effort to improve the Department's ability to communicate with child day

care providers during emergencies and in routine business operations, the Department is in the process of including all licensed child day care programs as part of the Department's mass notification system. Once accomplished, this will enable the Department to dramatically increase the speed at which it can contact licensed programs by phone throughout the state. Additionally, the Department is updating its database with the email addresses of license child day care programs. The collection of these emails will avail the Department to yet another method of sharing information with child care programs. If you have an email address that you wish to share with the Department, you may email it to dph.daycare@ct.gov along with your name, the name of your program and license number. This temporary address will be available until February 1, 2012 for this purpose only. In the future, should your email address change, you may notify the Department by contacting the Child Day Care Licensing Program at 1-800-282-6063 or at Connecticut Department of Public Health, 410 Capitol Avenue, MS #12CBR, Hartford, CT 06134-0308.

Policies and Procedures Regarding Physical Plant Requirements
for Child Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes
(Effective December 22, 2011 until the time final regulations are adopted)

In regard to the physical plant requirements specified in section 19a-79-7a of the Regulations for Connecticut State Agencies, the following requirements shall NOT apply to programs that serve exclusively school age children:

- The building, equipment and services shall be maintained in a good state of repair. A maintenance program shall be established that ensures that the interior, exterior and grounds of the building are maintained, kept clean and orderly, free from accumulations of refuse, dampness, stagnant water, dilapidated structures and other health and safety hazards
- Windows that open to the outside and are used for ventilation shall be equipped with sixteen (16) mesh screening
- Electrical outlets shall be provided with safety covers or approved safety outlets
- Any unprotected glass doors, windows or mirrors to which children have access shall be protected to a height of thirty six (36) inches from the floor or surface on which a child stands
- There shall be an area available for the individual storage of each child's clothing and bedding
- The water heating equipment shall deliver water at the tap, the temperature of which shall be within a range of sixty (60) degrees Fahrenheit to one hundred fifteen (115) degrees Fahrenheit. It shall have the capacity to deliver the required amounts at all times in conformance with the State of Connecticut Basic Building Codes
- Walls, ceilings, floors and rugs shall be maintained in a state of repair and be washable or easily cleanable. Rugs, if used, shall be secured to the floor
- There shall be effective measures taken to prevent vermin from entering or breeding in the child day care center or group day care home. All openings to the outer air used for ventilation shall be screened with a minimum of sixteen (16) mesh screening and doors shall be provided to prevent the entrance of vectors
- Adequate equipment for rest shall be provided. An individual cot shall be provided for any child who regularly remains five (5) hours or longer each day. When cots are shared, they shall be washed and disinfected and linens changed between children. In a group day care home, an individual mat or individual sleeping bag may be substituted for the individual cot
- Metal equipment shall be free from rust or chipping paint
- Hardware such as air conditioners, water heaters or fuse boxes shall be inaccessible to children
- Fences used to protect children from hazards shall be at least four (4) feet in height

Programs that serve exclusively school age children must maintain a building and equipment that is sanitary and free of health and safety hazards.

Programs that serve exclusively school age children may utilize program space with the ambient air temperature less than sixty-five (65) degrees Fahrenheit provided the temperature is warm enough to accommodate the activities with comfort. Programs that serve exclusively school age children may utilize program space with lighting less than the fifty (50) foot candles and thirty (30) foot candles required pursuant to section 19a-79-7a(e)(9) provided the lighting is bright enough to accommodate the activities with comfort.

Programs located in a public school or private school in compliance with section 10-188 of the Connecticut General Statutes and approved by the State Board of Education or accredited by an accredited agency recognized by the State Board of Education are not required to verify compliance with the water testing requirements of 19a-79-7a(c). Programs that are located in a facility that is subject to the requirements related to radon testing in school buildings pursuant to section 10-220 of Connecticut General Statutes are not required to verify compliance with the radon testing requirement of 19a-79-7a(e)(17).