

## Chapter DCF 251

### GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS

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**Note:** Corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, January, 1997, No. 493. Corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, September, 1998, No. 513. Chapter HFS 46 was renumbered to chapter DCF 251 under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635.

**DCF 251.01 Authority and purpose.** This chapter is promulgated under the authority of s. 48.67, Stats., to establish licensing requirements under s. 48.65, Stats., for group child care centers for children. The purpose of this chapter is to protect the health, safety and welfare of children being cared for in group child care centers.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: am. Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; **CR 07-102: am. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.**

**DCF 251.02 Applicability. (1) INCLUDED AND EXCLUDED CARE ARRANGEMENTS.** This chapter applies to all group child care centers, whether the facility in which the child care and supervision are provided is known as a day care center, nursery school or preschool, head start or school-age child care program, or by any other designation, but it does not apply to the following:

- (a) Care and supervision of children in a program, including religious education classes, which operates no more than 4 hours a week.
- (b) Group lessons to develop a talent or skill, such as dance or music lessons, social group meetings and activities and group athletic activities.
- (c) Care and supervision while the child's parent is on the premises and is engaged in shopping, recreation or other non-work activities.
- (d) Care and supervision provided at the site to the child of a recipient of temporary assistance to needy families or Wisconsin works who is involved in orientation, enrollment or initial assessment prior to the development of an employability plan or the child care is provided where parents are provided training or counseling.
- (e) Seasonal programs of 10 days or less duration in any 3-month period, including day camps, vacation bible schools and holiday child care programs.
- (f) Care and supervision in emergency situations.
- (g) Care and supervision while the child's parent is employed on the premises if the child receives care and supervision for no more than 3 hours a day.

**Note:** Section 48.65, Stats., exempts parents, guardians and certain other relatives; public and parochial (private) schools; persons who come to the home of the child's parent to provide care for less than 24 hours per day; and counties, cities, towns, school districts and libraries that provide programs for children primarily intended for social or recreational purposes from the requirement of a license. As specified under s. 49.155 (4), Stats., or s. DCF 201.04 (1), programs, other than those operated by public schools, are required to be licensed by the department or certified by a county agency in order to be eligible to receive a child care subsidy. To be eligible for child care subsidy payments under s. 49.155 (4), Stats., or DCF 201.04 (1), programs, other than those operated by public schools, may be required to be licensed by the department or certified by a county agency.

**(2) EXCEPTION TO A REQUIREMENT.** The department may grant an exception to a requirement of this chapter when it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department that granting the

exception will not jeopardize the health, safety or welfare of any child served by the center. A request for an exception shall be in writing, shall be sent to the department and shall include justification for the requested action and a description of any alternative provision planned to meet the intent of the requirement.

**Note:** A request for an exception to a requirement of this chapter should be sent to the licensing representative at the appropriate field office of the Department's Division of Early Care and Education. See Appendix A for addresses of the regional offices.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; correction in (1) (d) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats.; CR 03-052: am. (1) (intro.) and (d) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05.

**DCF 251.03 Definitions.** In this chapter:

- (1)** "Administrator" means the person responsible to the licensee for management of the group child care center.
- (2)** "Assistant child care teacher" means a child care worker who works under the supervision of a child care teacher and meets the qualifications under s. DCF 251.05 (1) (e).
- (3)** "Care" means providing for the safety and the developmental needs of a child in a group child care center.
- (3m)** "Caregiver background check" means the retrieval of information about an individual's past criminal conduct pursuant to s. 48.685, Stats., and ch. DHS 12 that may bear on the suitability of that individual to assume a child caregiving role or have regular contact with children at the center.
- (4)** "Center director" means the person responsible to the licensee for the supervision of the center's program for children and for the supervision of the center's staff and who meets the qualifications of s. DCF 251.05 (1) (c).
- (4g)** "Center-provided transportation" means transportation provided in a vehicle owned, leased or contracted for by the center or in volunteer or staff-owned vehicles regardless of whether the driver is reimbursed for the use of the vehicle.
- (4m)** "Center-provided vehicle" means a vehicle owned or leased by the center or a vehicle owned by the licensee or an employee that is used to transport children, but does not include a vehicle owned and driven by a parent or volunteer.
- (5)** "Child care teacher" means a child care worker who plans, implements and supervises the daily activities for a designated group of children and meets the qualifications under s. DCF 251.05 (1) (d).
- (6)** "Child care worker" means a child care teacher or assistant child care teacher in a group child care center.
- (8)** "Complaint" means an allegation that a provision of this chapter or of ch. 48, Stats., has been violated.
- (8m)** "Course for credit" means a course that is worth at least 2 credits from an institution of higher education.
- (8r)** "Crib" means a bed for an infant or young child that is enclosed on 4 sides including play pens and portable cribs.
- (9)** "Department" means the Wisconsin department of children and families.
- (10)** "Division" means the department's division of early care and education.

**(10m)** “Emergency” means situations such as: fire, tornado, flood, extreme outdoor heat or cold, loss of building service including, no heat, water, electricity, or telephone, threats to the building or its occupants, lost or missing children or a circumstance such as a medical emergency, illness or other situation requiring immediate attention that may be disruptive to a child or children in the care of the center.

**(11)** “Field trip” means any experience a child has away from the premises of the center, while under the care of center staff, whether a child walks or is transported.

**(11g)** “Fit and qualified” means displaying the capacity to successfully nurture and care for children and may include consideration of any of the following:

- (a) Abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- (b) A history of a civil or criminal conviction or administrative rule violation that substantially relates to caring for children, as described in ch. DHS 12.
- (c) Exercise of unsound judgment.
- (d) A history of civil or criminal offenses or any other action that demonstrate an inability to manage financial resources or the activities of a center.

**(11r)** “Full day center” means a center that accepts children for care for 5 or more consecutive hours in a day.

**(12)** “Group” means a specific number of children who have a regularly assigned child care worker and who are cared for in the same self-contained room or area at the center.

**(13)** “Group child care center” or “center” means a facility where a person for less than 24 hours a day provides care and supervision for 9 or more children who are not related to the provider.

**(13m)** “Hazard” means a potential source of harm that can jeopardize the health, safety or well-being of children in care.

**(14)** “HealthCheck provider” means a provider of health assessment and evaluation services eligible to be certified under s. DHS 105.37 (1) (a).

**(14g)** “In care” means enrolled in the center, with the center providing supervision, either on or off the premises, for the safety and the developmental needs of the child or children.

**(14r)** “Inclement weather” means stormy or severe weather such as any of the following:

- (a) Heavy rain.
- (b) Temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.
- (c) Wind chills of 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for children age 2 and above.
- (d) Wind chills of 20 degrees Fahrenheit or below for children under age 2.

**(15)** “Infant” means a child under one year of age.

**(16)** “Institution of higher education” means an educational institution which meets all of the following criteria except, in the case of a business school or technical institution, par. (c):

- (a) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;
- (b) Is legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
- (c) Provides an education program for which it awards a bachelor’s degree or provides not less than a 2-year program which is acceptable for full credit toward that degree; and
- (d) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association or, if not accredited, is an institution whose credits are accepted, on transfer, by not less than 3 institutions which are accredited, for credit on the same basis as if transferred from an institution that is accredited.

**(17)** “Licensee” means the corporation, individual, partnership or non-incorporated association or cooperative which has

legal and financial responsibility for the operation of a child care center and for meeting the requirements of this chapter.

**(18)** “Licensing representative” means a department employee responsible for licensing group child care centers.

**(18m)** “Mildly ill” means a child who has a common, temporary illness that is non-progressive in nature and is not listed on the communicable disease chart in appendix A of ch. DHS 145.

**(19)** “Night care” means any care that is offered by a licensed group child care center between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

**(20)** “Parent” means either “parent” as defined in s. 48.02 (13), Stats., or “guardian” as defined in s. 48.02 (8), Stats.

**(21)** “Parent cooperative” means a center organized by parents for their preschool children in which the parents have decision-making authority to establish and change policy, program and personnel practices.

**(22)** “Parochial or private school” means an educational program which meets all the criteria specified under s. 118.165 (1), Stats., or as determined by the superintendent of public instruction under s. 118.167, Stats.

**(22g)** “Part day center” means a center where a defined group of children attend for a specified period of time that is less than 5 consecutive hours in length.

**(22r)** “Physical Restraint” means the use of physical force to restrict the free movement of all or part of a child’s body.

**(23)** “Physician” has the meaning prescribed in s. 448.01 (5), Stats.

**(24)** “Physician assistant” has the meaning prescribed in s. 448.01 (6), Stats.

**(25)** “Premises” means the tract of land on which a center is located, including all buildings and structures on that land.

**(26)** “Regularly assigned child care worker” means a child care worker who is assigned to a specific group of children in a self-contained room or area for not less than 5 hours per day.

**(26m)** “Representative of the department” means a department employee or a representative from an agency the department contracts with to provide pre-licensing services.

**(27)** “School-age child” means a child 5 years of age or older who is enrolled in a public school or a parochial or other private school.

**(28)** “Self-contained room or area” means a room separated by permanent walls or an area separated by permanent or portable partitions or dividers acting as a visual barrier for children which is reserved for a group of children and contains the indoor equipment and furnishings required for that group.

**(28m)** “Shaken baby syndrome” or “SBS” means a severe form of brain injury that occurs when an infant or young child is shaken or thrown forcibly enough to cause the brain to rebound against his or her skull.

**(29)** “Sleeping bag” means a padded fabric bag that is closed or capable of being closed on three sides.

**(29g)** “Substitute” means a person who replaces a regularly scheduled person and meets the requirements under s. DCF 251.05 (1) (j).

**(29m)** “Sudden infant death syndrome” or “SIDS” means the sudden death of an infant under one year of age that remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene and a review of the clinical history.

**(30)** “Supervision of children” means guidance of the behavior and activities of children for their health, safety and well-being by child care workers who are within sight and sound of the children.

**(31)** “Supervision of staff” means guidance of the behavior and activities of center employees which may include provision of instructions to carry out activities for limited periods of time out of sight or hearing of the supervisor.

(32) “Toddler” means a child at least one year of age but less than 2 years of age.

(33) “Universal precautions” means measures taken to prevent transmission of infection from contact with blood or other potentially infectious material, as recommended by the U.S. public health services centers for disease control and adopted by the U.S. occupational safety and health administration (OSHA) as 29 CFR 1910.1030.

**Note:** “Standard precautions” for infection control measures incorporate universal precautions. Information on the OSHA requirements related to standard or universal precautions is available on the OSHA web site at <http://www.osha.gov>. Information is also available from the Child Care Information Center, 1-800-362-7353.

(34) “Volunteer” means a person who is not paid, but agrees to give time, with or without reimbursement for expenses, to transport children attending a group child care center or to work in a group child care center.

(35) “Wading pool” means a shallow pool, with sides 15 inches or less in height, capable of being dumped to change water and used primarily for small children.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; correction in (22) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats.; CR 03-052: am. (1), (3), (6), (13), (17), (18), (19), (33) and (34), cr. (3m), (4m), (8m), (10m), (11g), (11r), (14g), (14r), (18m), (22g), (22r), (26m), (29m) and (35), r. (7) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (2), (3m), (4), (5), (9), (10), (11g) (b), (14) and (18m) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 6. and 7., Stats.; Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: cr. (4g), (8r), (11g) (d), (13m), (28m) and (29g), am. (11), (11g) (intro.), (14r) (b) to (d) and (34) Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09; correction in (29g) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register December 2008 No. 636.**

**DCF 251.04 Operational requirements. (1) TERMS OF A LICENSE.** (a) The number of children at a group child care center at any one time may not exceed the number for which the center is licensed.

(b) The age of children served by a center may not be younger or older than the age range specified in the license.

(c) The hours, days and months of a center’s operation may not exceed those specified in the license.

**(2) ADMINISTRATION.** A group child care center licensee shall do all of the following:

(a) Comply with all laws governing the facility and its operation.

**Note:** Under the state public accommodation law, s. 106.52 (3), Stats., as well as federal statutes and regulations related to use of federal funding, and some local anti-discrimination ordinances, denying admission on the basis of race, handicap, religion or certain other characteristics may be illegal.

(b) Comply with all requirements of this chapter.

(c) Ensure that all information provided to the department is current and accurate.

(d) If residing in another state, designate in writing, as part of the application under s. DCF 251.12 (2), a Wisconsin resident who is responsible on behalf of the licensee for ensuring compliance with all requirements of this chapter.

(e) Meet, upon request of the department, with a licensing representative on matters pertaining to the license.

(f) Prior to receiving or continuing a license, complete all application forms and pay all fees and forfeitures due to the department.

(g) Submit to the department a certificate of insurance reflecting

1. current dates of coverage for all of the following:

a. General liability insurance which provides coverage with limits of not less than \$25,000 for each person and total limits of \$75,000 for each occurrence.

b. Vehicle liability insurance, when transportation is provided by the center, with minimums no less than those specified in s. 121.53, Stats.

c. Non-owned vehicle liability insurance when transportation is provided in vehicles not owned by the center, excluding public transportation vehicles and chartered vehicles, with minimums no less than those specified in s. 121.53, Stats.

2. An indication that pets are included in the liability coverage if cats or dogs are permitted in areas of the center accessible to children during the hours of operation.

(h) Develop, submit to the department for review and implement written policies on the following subjects:

1. Fee payments and refunds.

2. Personnel, including job descriptions, hours of work, lunch and break times, holidays, vacations, sick leaves, leaves of absence, probationary periods, performance evaluations, grievance procedures and the disciplinary process. The personnel policy shall contain a procedure that requires staff to notify the licensee and the licensee to notify the department as soon as possible but no later than the next business day when any of the following occurs:

a. The employee has been convicted of a crime.

b. The employee has been or is being investigated by any governmental agency for any other act, offense, or omission, including an investigation related to the abuse or neglect or threat of abuse or neglect, to a child or other client, or an investigation related to misappropriation of a client’s property.

c. The employee has a substantiated governmental finding against them for abuse or neglect of a child or adult or for misappropriation of a client’s property.

d. When a professional license held by an employee has been denied, revoked, restricted or otherwise limited.

3. Discharge of enrolled children.

(i) Develop, submit to the department for approval and implement as approved written policies and plans, consistent with the requirements of this chapter, on the following subjects:

1. Admission.

2. Health care. If the center is licensed to care for children under one year of age, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome risk reduction procedures shall be included.

3. Education.

4. Nutrition.

5. Child guidance including appropriate ways to manage crying, fussing or distraught children.

6. Contingency plans to be followed in the event of a fire, tornado, missing child or other emergency.

7. Continuing education of staff.

8. Orientation of new staff and volunteers.

9. Transportation, if the center will transport children either on field trips or on a regular schedule. The policy shall include a procedure to ensure that no child is left unattended in a vehicle.

(j) Ensure that all published statements such as brochures and publicity releases are accurate.

(k) Post the child care license near the entrance or in some other conspicuous area of the center that is visible to the public.

(L) Post next to the child care center license the results of the most recent licensing inspection, including any rule violations cited by the department and any notice of enforcement action including, license revocation or denial and any stipulations, conditions, exceptions, or exemptions that affect the license.

(m) Ensure that any action, by commission or omission, or any condition or occurrence relating to the operation or maintenance of the child care center does not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of any child under the care of the licensee.

(n) Submit to the department by the department’s next business day a completed Background Information Disclosure form and appropriate caregiver background check fees when there is a change in the board chairperson or a person aged 10 and above becomes a household member.

(o) Submit to the department by the department’s next business day a completed Background Information Disclosure form for each current household member who turns age 10.



**Note:** For more information about caregiver background checks refer to the administrative rule under ch. DHS 12. Information on how to obtain a copy of the Background Information Disclosure form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(p) Submit a current delegation of administrative authority signed by the licensee that outlines the organizational structure and designates, in a chain of command form, those persons on the premises in charge of the center for all hours of operation.

**(3) REPORTS.** The licensee shall report to the department all of the following. If the report is made by telephone, the licensee shall submit a written report to the appropriate regional licensing office within 5 business days of the incident. Fax, e-mail, and letter are acceptable ways of filing a written report:

(a) Any death of a child in the care of the center or any incident or accident that occurs while the child is in the care of the center that results in an injury that requires professional medical treatment within 48 hours of the licensee becoming aware of the medical treatment.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Accident Report — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to report incidents, accidents or deaths. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(b) Any damage to the premises which may affect compliance with this chapter, within 24 hours after the occurrence.

(c) A change in the administrator or center director of a child care center, within 30 days after the change.

(d) A change of any program service, at least 5 days prior to the change.

(e) Statistical data required by the department on forms provided by the department.

(f) If requested by the department, a plan of correction for cited violations of this chapter or ch. 48, Stats., in a format specified by the department. The department shall receive the plan of correction by the date the department specifies and be approved by the department licensing representative.

**Note:** The licensing representative will notify the licensee if a plan of correction is required and provide the plan of correction format with the notification.

(g) Any known convictions, pending charges or other offenses of the licensee, child care center employees or other person subject to a caregiver background check which could potentially relate to the care of children at the center or activities of the center by the Department's next business day.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.04 (8) on reporting suspected child abuse, s. DCF 251.04 (6) (c) on maintaining a center medical log book and s. DCF 251.07 (6) (a) 2. on logging injuries in a center medical log.

(h) Any change in room usage, such as changing the way rooms are primarily used by children or using rooms not previously approved for use at least 20 working days prior to the change. Changes in room usage shall be approved by the department prior to the change.

(i) Any incident related to a child who leaves the premises of the center without the knowledge of the provider or any incident that results in a provider not knowing the whereabouts of a child in attendance at the center within 24 hours of the occurrence.

(j) Any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by an employee or volunteer that was reported under s. DCF 251.04 (8) (a) or any inappropriate discipline of a child by an employee or volunteer including any incident that results in a child being forcefully shaken or thrown against a surface, hard or soft, during the child's hours of attendance within 24 hours after the occurrence.

(k) Any incident involving law enforcement within 24 hours after the occurrence that:

1. Involves a licensee, a household resident or an employee of the center in an incident that causes, or threatens to cause, physical or serious emotional harm to an individual, including a child in the care of the center.

2. Involves any traffic-related incident where a person responsible for the violation transports children in the care of the center.

(L) Any construction or remodeling on the premises that has the potential to affect an area accessible to children or a condition of the license. Notification shall be provided in writing before the construction or remodeling begins.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.11 (5) (a) for items that affect a condition of the license.

**Note:** It is recommended that the licensee check with the local municipality to determine whether a building permit is required before beginning any construction or remodeling.

(m) Any confirmed case of a communicable disease reportable under ch. DHS 145 in a child enrolled at the child care center or a person in contact with children at the center within 48 hours.

(n) Any change in meal preparation arrangements or transportation services at least 5 calendar days before the change. Centers adding meal preparation after an initial license has been issued shall document compliance with building codes related to kitchens before beginning to prepare meals on the premises.

**(4) PARENTS.** (a) The center administrator shall notify the parents of an enrolled child of all of the following:

1. When their child has been exposed to a diagnosed or suspected communicable disease reportable under ch. DHS 145 and transmitted through normal contact.

2. Immediately, if the child becomes ill or is injured seriously enough to require professional medical treatment.

3. When they pick up the child or when the child is delivered, if the child sustains a minor injury.

4. Of the date, time and destination of any field trip which requires the use of a vehicle.

(b) The center shall permit parents to visit and observe at any time during the center's hours of operation, unless access is prohibited or restricted by court order.

(c) The center shall make opportunities available at least twice each year for parent and staff communication regarding the child's adjustment to the program, and the child's growth and development.

**Note:** When a child care worker or a parent has concerns about a child's growth or development, a referral to a Birth-to-Three agency or the local public school should be considered to determine if the child is eligible for special services. Wisconsin has an information and referral service for persons with questions or concerns about a child's development called First Step that is available to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When a call is placed to First Step at 1-800-642-7837, the caller will learn about early intervention services as well as other related services in the area.

(d) If religious training is part of the center program, reference to the religious component shall be included in any publicity and in the education policy. This information shall be shared with parents.

(e) The center shall provide a summary of this chapter to the parents of each child upon the child's enrollment.

**Note:** Copies of a summary of this chapter may be obtained from the Child Care Information Center, 2109 S. Stoughton Rd., Madison, WI 53716, 1-800-362-7353.

(f) A copy of this chapter shall be posted or available in an area of the center where parents are likely to see it.

(g) A copy of the child care policies of the center shall be made available to the parents in an area of the center accessible to parents. Personnel policies need not be included.

**(5) STAFF RECORDS.** (a) The licensee shall maintain a file on each employee which is available for examination by the licensing representative at the center. An employee's file shall include all of the following:

1. The employee's name, address, date of birth, education, position, previous work experience in child care including reason for leaving previous positions, and the name, address and telephone numbers of persons to be notified in an emergency.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Staff Record — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form for recording staff information. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

2. A background information disclosure form, completed prior to the employee's first day of employment and every 4 years thereafter, that does not reveal any information which may preclude the person's employment under s. 48.685, Stats., or ch. DHS 12.

**Note:** The department's form, Background Information Disclosure, is used for reporting background information. Information on how to obtain the form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

3. A complete caregiver background check as specified in s. 48.685, Stats., and ch. DHS 12 including the results of any subsequent investigation related to information obtained as part of the background check within 60 days of employment and every 4 years thereafter.

4. The physical examination report required under s. DCF 251.05 (1) (j) 1.

5. A certificate from The Registry documenting that the person has met the educational qualifications for the position if the person has worked as a teacher, director or administrator at the center for at least 3 months. A copy of an educator's license issued by the department of public instruction as a teacher may substitute for a certificate from The Registry. For persons not required to have a Registry certificate including assistant teachers and a teacher, center director or administrator who has not worked for the center for more than 3 months, documentation of the person's educational qualifications shall be on file.

6. Documentation of orientation and continuing education received under s. DCF 251.05 (2).

**Note:** The licensee may use either the Department's form, Staff Continuing Education Record — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to document the completion of continuing education. The licensee may use either the Department's form, Staff Orientation Checklist — Group Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to document completion of staff orientation. Information on how to obtain Department's forms is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

7. Documentation of training in shaken baby syndrome prevention taken before beginning work if the person will provide care and supervision to children under age 5.

8. Documentation of days and hours worked when the person was included in the staff-to-child ratio.

(b) Adults who work at the center and who are compensated from sources other than the center, and student teachers, shall meet the staff record requirements specified in par. (a) 1., 2. and 3.

**(6) CHILDREN'S RECORDS.** (a) The licensee shall maintain a current written record obtained prior to the child's first day of attendance or subsequent re-enrollment at the center on each child enrolled and shall make the record available to the licensing representative on request. Each record shall include all of the following:

1. Enrollment information consisting of:
  - a. The name and birthdate of the child.
  - b. The full names of the child's parents.
  - c. The child's home address and telephone number.
  - d. An address and telephone number where a parent can be reached while the child is in care.
  - e. The name, address, telephone number and relationship to the child of a person to be notified in an emergency when a parent cannot be reached immediately.
  - f. The name, address and telephone number of a physician or medical facility caring for the child.
  - g. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of persons other than a parent authorized to call for the child or to accept the child who is dropped off.
  - h. The child's first day of attendance at the center.
  - i. For an infant or toddler, a current statement from the parent about the infant or toddler's habits of eating, sleeping, toileting and communication, and specific techniques which appear to comfort the child.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.09 (1) (am) which specifies what written information must be obtained from the parent of an infant or toddler. The licensee may use either the department's form, Intake for Child under 2 Years — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form for recording information about each child under 2 years of age. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's

website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

2. Written consent from the parent for emergency medical care or treatment.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Child Care Enrollment, or the licensee's own form to obtain consent of the child's parent for emergency medical treatment. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

3. Authorization from the parent to transport the child to and from the center, when transportation is provided.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Transportation Permission — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to obtain authorization to transport children to and from the Center. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

4. Authorization from the parent for the child to participate in and be transported for field trips and other activities, if these are part of the center's program.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Field Trip or Other Activity Notification/Permission, or the licensee's own form for securing parental information. The department's form, Child Care Enrollment, also contain authorization from a parent to participate in field trips if the center chooses to use that form. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

5. Authorization from the parent outlining the plan for a child to come to the center from school, home or other activities or to go from the center to school, home or other activities unless the child is accompanied by a parent or other authorized person or transported by the center.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Alternate Arrival/Release Agreement — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form for securing the parent's authorization. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

6. Documentation of each child's health history on a form provided by the department.

**Note:** The department's form, Health History and Emergency Care Plan is used for health history information. Information on how to obtain the form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

6m. Documentation of each child's immunization history.

**Note:** The form, Day Care Immunization Record, may be used to record immunization information. An electronic printout from the Wisconsin Immunization Registry or other registry maintained by a health care provider may be used in place of the Day Care Immunization Record. Information on how to obtain the form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

7. Specific informed written consent from the parent for each incident of participation by a child in any research or testing project.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Informed Consent for Observation or Testing by an Outside Agency — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form for securing the parent's written consent. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

8. The health examination report required under s. DCF 251.07 (6) (k) 3.

(b) The licensee shall maintain a current, accurate written record of the daily attendance and date of birth of each child for the length of time the child is enrolled in the program. The actual time of arrival and departure for each child shall be recorded if hours of arrival and departure vary among children.

**Note:** The form, Daily Attendance Record — Child Care, may be used to record a child's daily attendance. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(c) The licensee shall maintain a log or logs for medication and injury and shall record daily any injuries received by a child or medication dispensed to a child, as follows:

1. The log shall be in a book with stitched binding with pages that are lined and numbered. The pages may not be removed or lines skipped.

2. Entries shall be made in ink on the date of occurrence and shall be dated and signed or initialed by the person making the entry.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.07 (6) (f) and (j) for information on recording entries in the center medical log book.

(7) **CONFIDENTIALITY.** The licensee is responsible for the compliance of child care center employees and volunteers with s. 48.78, Stats., and this subsection. The licensee shall ensure that:

(a) Persons having access to children's records do not discuss or disclose personal information regarding the children and facts learned about the children and their relatives. This does not apply to:

1. The parent or a person authorized in writing by the parent to receive the information.

2. Any agency assisting in planning for the child when informed written parental consent has been given.

3. Agencies authorized under s. 48.78, Stats.

(b) A parent, upon request, has access to all records and reports maintained on his or her child.

(c) All records required by the department under this chapter for licensing purposes are available to the licensing representative.

(8) **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE.** (a) A licensee, employee or volunteer at a child care center who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected as defined in ss. 48.02 (1) and 48.981 (1), Stats., shall immediately contact the county department of social services or human services or a local law enforcement agency, as required by s. 48.981, Stats.

(b) The licensee, shall ensure that every employee and volunteer who comes in contact with the children at the child care center has received training every 2 years in all of the following:

1. Child abuse and neglect law.

2. How to identify children who have been abused or neglected.

3. The procedure for ensuring that known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect are immediately reported to the proper authorities.

**Note:** Failure of the licensee to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect does not lessen the legal duty of a child care employee to report known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Information related to child abuse may be obtained from the Child Care Information Center, 2109 S. Stoughton Rd., Madison, WI 53716, 1-800-362-7353.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.04 (3) (j) on reporting suspected abuse of a child by a staff member to the Department.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: am. (2) (c), (f), (g), (i) and (m), (3) (a), (f) and (g), (5) (a), (6) (a) and 6., (7) (intro), (8) (a), (b) (intro), and 3., cr. (3) (h) to (L), (6) (a) 6m., r. and recr. (5) (a) 2. and 3. Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (2) (d), (3) (j), (4) (a) 1., (5) (a) 2. to 5. made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: am. (1) (a), (2) (f), (3) (h) 2., (i) 5., 6., (k), (L), (3) (intro.), (a), (c), (g), (j), (6) (a) 5. and (b), cr. (2) (h) 2. a., b., c., d., (i) 9., (m), (o), (p), (3) (m), (n), (5) (a) 6., 7., 8. and (6) (a) 8., r. and recr. (5) (a) 5. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09; corrections in (3) (m), (5) (a) 6. and (6) (a) 8. made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register December 2008 No. 636.**

**DCF 251.05 Staffing. (1) RESPONSIBILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF.** (a) *Competency.* A child care worker, including the center administrator, center director, child care teachers, assistant teachers, and volunteers counted in the staff to child ratio shall be physically, mentally and emotionally able to provide responsible care for all children including children with disabilities.

(b) *Shaken baby syndrome prevention training.* Except for a volunteer who is not counted in staff-to-child ratios, each child care worker including the administrator, center director, teachers, assistant teachers, and substitutes who provide care and supervision to children under 5 years of age shall receive department-approved training in shaken baby syndrome and impacted babies and appropriate ways to manage crying, fussing or distraught children. The training shall be completed by one of the following methods:

1. Complete the department-approved, in-person training on shaken baby syndrome prevention and impacted babies before the date on which the child care worker begins to work with children under age 5 years.

2. View a department-approved video or complete a department-approved, web-based course on shaken baby syndrome prevention before the date on which the child care worker begins to work with children under age 5 years and complete a department-approved, in-person training within 6 months of beginning to work with children under age 5.

**Note:** Department-approved training in shaken baby syndrome prevention is included in the department-approved non-credit courses called *Introduction to the Child Care Profession* and *Fundamentals of Infant and Toddler*, if the course was taken after 7/1/05. Information on department-approved training in shaken baby syndrome is available from the Child Care Information Center at 800-362-7353.

(c) *Cardiopulmonary resuscitation training.* All employees in regular contact with children shall obtain and maintain a current certificate of completion for infant and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator use from an agency approved by the department within 6 months after beginning to work with children. Volunteers included in determining staff-to-child ratios shall obtain a certificate of completion in infant and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation after volunteering for 240 hours. The time spent obtaining or renewing cardiopulmonary resuscitation training may be counted towards the required continuing education hours.

(d) *Administrator.* 1. The licensee may act as administrator of a group child care center. If the licensee does not act as administrator, the licensee shall designate a person or persons to be the administrator or administrators of the center. The administrator shall be responsible for the center's management, including personnel, finance, physical plant and the day to day operation of the center.

2. An administrator shall:

a. Be at least 21 years of age.

b. Have completed high school or its equivalent as determined by the Wisconsin department of public instruction.

3. Before a person assumes the position of administrator, the person shall have both of the following:

a. One year of experience as a manager or satisfactory completion of one credit or non-credit department-approved course in business or program administration.

b. One year of experience as a center director or child care teacher in a licensed child care center or kindergarten or satisfactory completion of one non-credit department-approved course or one course for credit in early childhood education or its equivalent.

4. If the board of a parent cooperative is responsible for management of a center, the requirements under subs. 2., and 3., do not apply.

5. Within one year of assuming the position, each administrator shall complete at least 10 hours of training in supervision or personnel management, if the administrator has not previously received that training. The training may be counted as part of the annual continuing education requirement.

(e) *Center director.* 1. The licensee may act as the center director. If the licensee does not act as center director, the licensee shall designate a person or persons to be the center director for each center location.

2. The center director shall be responsible for the supervision of the planning and implementation of the center's program for children, the supervision of staff at the center, staff meetings and orientation and continuing education for the staff.

3. A center director shall be employed on one of the following schedules:

a. At least 10 hours a week for the exclusive purpose of carrying out center director responsibilities in a single full-day center location licensed for 50 or fewer children.

b. At least 20 hours a week for the exclusive purpose of carrying out center director responsibilities in a single full-day center location licensed for 51 or more children.



4. A center director for a program licensed to serve 50 or fewer children shall:

- a. Be at least 21 years of age.
- b. Have completed high school or its equivalent as determined by the Wisconsin department of public instruction.
- c. Have at least 80 full days or 120 half days of experience as a teacher or assistant teacher in a licensed child care center or other approved setting.
- d. Prior to beginning to work as a center director have completed at least one of the following training requirements:
  - i. Two non-credit department-approved courses in early childhood education and within one year of assuming the position, one course in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential or its equivalent.
  - ii. Two courses for credit in early childhood education and within one year of assuming the position, one course in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential or its equivalent.
  - iii. Forty eight credits from an institution of higher education with at least 3 credits in early childhood education and within one year of assuming the position, one course in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential or its equivalent.
  - iv. A certificate from The Registry indicating the person is on Registry Level 12 or above.
  - v. A one-year child care diploma from an institution of higher education.
  - vi. An associate degree in early childhood education or child care from an institution of higher education.
  - vii. Child development associate (CDA) credential issued by the council for early childhood professional recognition and within one year of assuming the position, one course in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential or its equivalent.
  - viii. A bachelor degree from an institution of higher education in early childhood education or child development or a license from the Wisconsin department of public instruction to act as a kindergarten, pre-kindergarten or early childhood (regular or special education) teacher.

**Note:** Information on how to obtain or renew a Wisconsin department of public instruction teacher license is available on the DPI website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/index.html>.

e. Complete at least 10 hours of training in supervision or personnel management within one year of assuming the position of center director, if the director has not previously received that training. The training may be counted as part of the annual continuing education requirement.

5. A center director for a program licensed to serve 51 or more children shall:

- a. Be at least 21 years of age.
- b. Have completed high school or its equivalent as determined by the Wisconsin department of public instruction.
- c. Have at least 2 years of experience as a child care teacher or center director in a licensed child care center or other approved setting.
- d. Prior to beginning to work as a center director have completed one of the following training requirements:
  - i. Four non-credit department-approved courses in early childhood education or its equivalent and within 3 years of assuming the position the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential. Up to two courses in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator may be used to meet the early childhood education requirement, if taken prior to beginning to work as a center director.
  - ii. Four courses for credit in early childhood education from an institution of higher education and within 3 years of assuming the position, the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Credential. Up to two courses in the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Cre-

dential may be used to meet the early childhood education requirement, if taken prior to beginning to work as a center director.

iii. An associate degree in early childhood education or child care from an institution of higher education.

iv. A bachelor degree in early childhood education from an institution of higher education or a license from Wisconsin department of public instruction to act as a kindergarten, pre-kindergarten or early childhood (regular or special education) teacher.

v. A certificate from The Registry indicating the person is on Registry Level 14 or above.

**Note:** Information on how to obtain or renew a Wisconsin department of public instruction teacher license is available on the DPI website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/index.html>.

(f) *Child care teacher*. 1. A child care teacher shall plan, implement and supervise the daily activities for a group of children.

2. A person who is a child care teacher shall be at least 18 years of age and have completed high school or its equivalent as determined by the Wisconsin department of public instruction.

3. A person who is a child care teacher shall document at least 80 full days or 120 half days of experience as an assistant child care teacher in a licensed child care center or other approved early childhood setting.

4. Prior to assuming the position, a person hired to be a child care teacher shall be qualified by having completed one of the following:

a. Two non-credit department-approved courses in early childhood education.

b. Two courses for credit in early childhood education or its equivalent from an institution of higher education.

**Note:** *Introduction to the Child Care Profession and Skills and Strategies for the Child Care Teacher* are the names of the non-credit courses approved by the Department to meet the entry level training requirements for a child care teacher.

c. Certificate from The Registry indicating that the person is qualified as a child care teacher.

d. Forty-eight credits from an institution of higher education with at least 3 credits in early childhood education or its equivalent.

e. A one-year child care diploma from an institution of higher education.

f. An associate degree in early childhood education or child care from an institution of higher education.

g. Child development associate credential issued by the council for early childhood professional recognition.

h. Certificate from American Montessori Society, Association Montessori International, or Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.

i. A bachelor degree in education from an institution of higher education or a license from the Wisconsin department of public instruction to act as a teacher.

**Note:** Information on how to obtain or renew a Wisconsin department of public instruction teacher license is available on the DPI website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/index.html>.

j. Certificate from the bureau of apprenticeship standards as a child development specialist.

(g) *Assistant child care teacher*. 1. An assistant child care teacher shall work under the supervision of a child care teacher with a group of children.

2. A person hired to be assistant child care teacher shall be qualified in one of the following ways:

a. The person shall be at least 18 years old and have satisfactorily completed one non-credit department-approved course in early childhood education or completes that training within 6 months after assuming the position.

**Note:** *Introduction to the Child Care Profession* is the name of the non-credit course approved by the Department to meet the entry level training requirements for a child care assistant teacher. Information on agencies offering the department-approved course is available on the department's website at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>.

b. The person shall be at least 18 years old and have satisfactorily completed one course for credit in early childhood education or its equivalent at an institution of higher education, or is enrolled in that course within 6 months after assuming the position.

c. The person shall have satisfactorily completed an assistant child care teacher training program approved by the Wisconsin department of public instruction.

3. A parent serving as an assistant child care teacher in a center operated by a parent cooperative is exempt from the training requirements under subd. 2.

(h) *Non-credit course criteria.* Non-credit courses offered to meet the non-credit course requirements specified in this subsection shall contain the components prescribed by the department and shall be approved by the department before being offered. The department may at any time withdraw its approval of a non-credit course. Instructors of non-credit department-approved courses shall be approved by the department prior to teaching a course.

**Note:** Information on the components prescribed by the department may be obtained by contacting one of the regional licensing offices in Appendix A. A list of agencies approved to offer non-credit department-approved courses is available on the department's website at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>.

(i) *Certificate.* Each administrator, center director and child care teacher shall obtain a certificate from The Registry (the Wisconsin early childhood professional recognition system) within 3 months after assuming the position. An administrator, a center director and teachers in a school-age only program shall obtain a certificate from The Registry within 6 months after assuming the position. Persons holding a teacher license issued by the department of public instruction are not required to obtain a Registry certificate.

**Note:** Information about how to obtain a certificate may be obtained from The Registry's website, <http://www.the-registry.org/Application/Application.htm> or by calling 608-222-1123.

(j) *Substitutes.* 1. When a regular required staff member is absent from a center, there shall be a substitute who is at least 18 years of age.

2. A substitute who is employed by the same licensee for more than 240 hours shall obtain at least one non-credit, department approved course or be currently enrolled in training to meet this requirement before completing 240 hours of work as a substitute. A substitute who provides care and supervision to children under age 5 shall have completed department-approved training in shaken baby syndrome as specified under par. (b) before working with children.

3. The center director or designee shall maintain a record of the days and hours worked by each substitute child care worker.

(k) *Volunteers and student teachers.* 1. Volunteers and student teachers shall participate in the orientation required under sub. (2) (a).

2. A volunteer who is used to meet staff-to-child ratios shall obtain at least one non-credit, department-approved course or be currently enrolled in training to meet this requirement before completing 240 hours of work as a volunteer. A volunteer who provides care and supervision to children under age 5 shall have completed department-approved training in shaken baby syndrome as specified under par. (b) before working with children.

**Note:** *Introduction to the Child Care Profession* is the non-credit course approved by the department to meet this requirement.

3. A volunteer who is not used to meet staff to child ratios shall have training in child care programming and procedures before working with children. The training shall include the responsibilities of the volunteer, general child supervision techniques, a review of the daily schedule and general health and safety practices including meal or snack preparation, dishwashing, toileting, personal hygiene and emergency evacuation procedures. This includes volunteers working in a center operated by a parent cooperative.

4. The center director or designee shall coordinate the volunteer program and keep on file documentation of the hours worked by volunteers who are used to meet staff to child ratios.

5. Student teachers who are not employed by the child care center may not be used to meet the staff to child ratios during the time the person is working as a student teacher.

(L) *Health examination.* 1. Except as provided under subd. 2., persons who work directly with children, except volunteers, shall have a health examination within 12 months before beginning work at a specific child care center or within 30 days after beginning work at the center. The results of the examination shall be stated on a form provided by the department. The report shall be dated and signed by a licensed physician, physician assistant or HealthCheck provider. The report shall indicate all of the following:

a. That the person is free from illness detrimental to children, including tuberculosis.

b. That the person is physically able to work with young children.

**Note:** The department's form, Staff Health Report — Child Care Provider, is used for recording physical examination information. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

2. The health examination requirement under subd. 1. does not apply to a person who requests an exemption from the department in writing. The exemption is granted based on adherence to religious belief in exclusive use of prayer or spiritual means for healing in accordance with a bona fide religious sect or denomination.

3. No licensee, employee, volunteer, visitor or parent with symptoms of serious illness or a communicable disease transmittable through normal contact reportable under ch. DHS 145 which presents a safety or health risk to children may be in contact with the children in care.

4. a. No licensee, employee, volunteer, visitor or parent whose behavior gives reasonable concern for the safety of children may be in contact with the children in care.

b. The department may require a licensee, employee or other person in contact with the children whose behavior gives reasonable concern for the safety of children to submit to an examination by a licensed mental health professional as a condition of licensure or employment.

**Note:** See also DCF 251.11 (1) (f) which requires a written statement from a physician or licensed mental health professional when there is reason to believe that the physical or mental health of a person may endanger children in care.

5. No person with a health history of typhoid, paratyphoid, dysentery or other diarrheal disease may work in a center until it is determined by appropriate tests that the person is not a carrier of the disease.

(2) **STAFF DEVELOPMENT.** (a) *Orientation.* Except as provided under subd. 12., each center shall develop and implement a written orientation program which all new employees, substitutes and regularly scheduled volunteers shall complete and document within their first week at the center. The orientation program shall cover all of the following:

1. Review of this chapter.

2. Review of center policies required under s. DCF 251.04 (2) (h) and (i).

3. Review of the center contingency plans required under s. DCF 251.04 (2) (i), including fire and tornado evacuation plans and the operation of fire extinguishers.

4. First aid procedures.

5. Job responsibilities in relation to the job description.

6. Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control, including handwashing procedures and universal precautions for handling body fluids.

**Note:** A copy of the universal precautions may be obtained from the Child Care Information Center by calling 800-362-7353.



7. Schedule of activities of the center.
8. Review of child abuse and neglect laws and center reporting procedures.
9. The procedure for ensuring that all child care workers know the children assigned to their care and their whereabouts at all times including during center-provided transportation.
10. Child management techniques.
11. Procedure for sharing information related to a child's special health care needs including any physical, emotional, social or cognitive disabilities with any child care worker who may be assigned to care for that child throughout the day.
12. Review of procedures to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome prior to an employee's or volunteer's first day of work, if the center is licensed to care for children under one year of age.
13. The procedure to contact a parent if a child is absent from the center without prior notification from the parent.
14. Information on any special needs a child enrolled in the center may have and the plan for how those needs will be met.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Staff Orientation Checklist — Group Child Care Centers, for documenting staff orientation. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(b) *Staff meetings.* To ensure that staff have the opportunity to receive pertinent information and clarification of problems and issues, each center shall conduct staff meetings at least 9 times in a calendar year or one time for each month of center operation and document that staff meetings have been held.

(c) *Continuing education.* 1. Each administrator, center director and child care worker who works more than 20 hours a week shall participate in at least 25 hours of continuing education each year.

2. Each administrator, center director and child care worker who works 20 or fewer hours a week shall participate in at least 15 hours of continuing education each year.

3. Continuing education hours may be used to meet the continuing education requirement during the year in which the hours are earned and for the 2 years following that year.

4. Continuing education courses taken for credit through an institution of higher education may be used to meet the continuing education requirement during the year the credits were earned and for the following 2 years.

5. Assistant child care teachers who are currently enrolled in their first entry level course are not required to earn continuing education hours for that calendar year.

7. Types of training acceptable to meet continuing education requirements shall be limited to:

- a. Formal courses resulting in credits or continuing education units.
- b. Workshops, conferences, seminars, lectures, correspondence courses and home study courses.
- c. Training offered by the child care center through the use of guest or staff trainers.
- d. Documented observation time in other early childhood programs.

8. Continuing education experiences may be in the areas of early childhood education, child development, child guidance, health, caring for children with special needs, first aid, nutrition as it pertains to child development, supervision of staff or the business or administrative aspects of the operation of a child care center or in communication skills.

9. Independent reading and watching of educational materials may be counted for up to 5 hours of continuing education per year for each person required under par. (c) 1. to have 25 hours of continuing education, and up to 2.5 hours of continuing education per

year for each person required under par. (c) 2. to have 15 hours of continuing education.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Staff Continuing Education Record — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to document the completion of continuing education. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(d) *Food service personnel orientation and training.* The center shall provide food service personnel with the orientation under par. (a) and shall document annual training of at least 4 hours in kitchen sanitation, food handling and nutrition.

(3) SUPERVISION. (a) At least one child care teacher shall supervise each group of children.

(b) Assistant child care teachers who are at least 18 years of age and have completed the training required for the position may provide sole supervision to a group of children in full-day centers for opening and closing hours, not to exceed the first 2 hours and the last 2 hours of center operation.

(c) Each child shall be closely supervised by a child care worker who is within the sight and sound of the children to guide the children's behavior and activities, prevent harm and assure safety.

(d) A child care worker may not provide care to children at the center more than 10 hours in any 24-hour period.

(e) A child may not be in care more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period.

(f) The center shall implement a procedure to ensure that the number, names and whereabouts of children in care are known to assigned child care workers at all times.

(g) A child may not be released to any person who has not been previously authorized by the parent.

(h) The center shall implement a procedure to contact a parent if a child is absent from the center without prior notification from the parent.

(i) No child shall be left in sole charge of a person under the age of 18.

(4) STAFFING AND GROUPING. (a) The maximum number of children in a group may not exceed the number specified in Table 251.05-D.

(b) The ratio of child care workers to children may not be less than the minimum number of child care workers to children specified in Table 251.05-D.

**TABLE DCF 251.05-D**  
**Maximum Group Size and Minimum Number of Child Care Workers in Group Child Care Centers**

Age of Children	Minimum Number of Child Care Workers to Children	Maximum Number of Children in a Group
Birth to 2 Years	1:4	8
2 years to 2½ Years	1:6	12
2½ Years to 3 Years	1:8	16
3 Years to 4 Years	1:10	20
4 Years to 5 Years	1:13	24
5 Years to 6 Years	1:17	34
6 Years and Over	1:18	36

(c) When 8 or fewer children are present in a center, there shall be a second adult available within 5 minutes for emergencies. The center shall maintain a signed and dated statement from that person, including address and telephone number, certifying that the person is available and agrees to serve if needed.

(d) Maximum group size does not apply to field trips, outdoor play areas and areas of the center reserved exclusively for eating, however staff-to-child ratios shall be maintained in those settings.

(e) During naptime, an adjustment in group size and staff-to-child ratios in Table 251.05–D may be made as follows:

1. One child care worker shall be within sight or sound of each group of sleeping children. If at least one child is awake, sight and sound supervision of awake children is required.

2. Adult-to-child ratios shall be maintained in the center during naptime.

3. Maximum group size requirements do not apply to napping groups.

(f) When there is a mixed-age group, the staff-to-child ratio shall be adjusted on a prorata basis, according to age.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Child Care Staff-To-Child Ratio Worksheet — Group Child Care Centers, to adjust the staff-to-child ratio. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(g) When infants and toddlers are part of a mixed-age group, the size of the group may not exceed 8.

(h) When the group of children is a mixed age group of children 2 years and older, the group size shall be determined by the number of children that can be cared for by 2 child care workers as determined by the staff-to-child prorata requirement under par. (f).

(i) In a center with 9 or more children present, there shall be at least 2 adults available in the center at all times. At least one of the adults shall be a child care worker directly involved in the supervision and care of the children.

(j) When 9 or more children are on a field trip there shall be at least 2 child care workers accompanying the children and the staff-to-child ratios in Table DCF 251.05–D shall be maintained. At least one of the child care workers shall be a child care teacher.

(k) Support staff, such as clerical, housekeeping and food service staff, may only be considered in determining the staff-to-child ratios:

1. During those hours when they give full attention to the care and supervision of children.

2. If they meet the qualifications for a child care worker.

(L) Child care workers shall be free of non-classroom duties when they are counted in meeting the staff-to-child ratios.

(m) Children of staff who attend the center and who are on the premises for supervision and care shall be included in determining group size and staff-to-child ratios.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; reprinted to correct error in Table, Register, February, 1997, No. 494; reprinted to correct error in Table, Register, March, 1997, No. 495; CR 03-052: r. and recr. (title), (1) (a), (1) (j) 3., (2) (c) 3. to 7., am. (1) (b) 3. b., (c) 5. (intro.), Table 46.05–A, (6) (intro.), Table 46.05–B, (d) 3., Table 46.05–C, (2) (a) (intro.), 3., 6., 8., 11., (4) (e) (intro.) and 1., r. (1) (c) 5. a. to i. and 6. a. to f., (1) (d) 3. a. to i., renum. (1) (j) 4. to be 5., cr. (1) (j) 4. a. and b., (2) (a) 12., (2) (c) 8. to 10., (3) (g) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (1) (j) 1. a., 3., (2) (a) 2. and 3. made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: r. and recr. (1), am. (2) (a), 9., (3) (b), (c), (f), (4) (d), (j) and Table D, cr. (2) (a) 13., 14., (3) (h) and (i), r. (2) (c) 6. and 10. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09; renumbering in (1) (e) 4. and corrections in (1) (e) 4. d., 5. d., (L) 3., (4) (j) and Table D made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1., 6. and 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635.**

### DCF 251.06 Physical plant and equipment.

(1) **BUILDING.** (a) The building in which a center is located shall comply with applicable state and local building codes. The licensee shall maintain a report of inspection of the building, which specifies that the building meets the applicable Wisconsin commercial building codes for use as a group child care center.

**Note:** Inspections can be obtained from a commercial building inspector certified by the Department of Commerce in accordance with ch. Comm 5, "Licenses, Certifications, and Registration," or a Wisconsin architect registered in accordance with chapter A-E 3, Architect Registration, or a Wisconsin engineer registered in accordance with chapter A-E 4, Professional Engineer Registration.

**Note:** Local authorities should be consulted to obtain any required zoning clearances or building permits.

(b) The department shall be given written notice of proposed construction, remodeling of existing space or change in rooms to be used by children prior to the initiation of the changes.

**Note:** Alterations, additions or changes of use to commercial buildings may require submittal of plans to and approval by the Department of Commerce or its agent before commencing construction. It is recommended that an architect or engineer be consulted prior to the beginning of any construction to determine whether plans must be submitted. When a center chooses to prepare meals on the premises after the initial building inspection has been completed, a new inspection may be necessary to ensure that the applicable commercial building codes related to kitchens have been met.

(c) Space designated for use by children may only be used by children and staff and may not be used for other purposes while the center is open.

(d) The inside temperature may not be less than 67° F.

(e) If the inside temperature exceeds 80° F., the licensee shall provide for air circulation with fans or by other means.

(2) **PROTECTIVE MEASURES.** (a) The indoor and outdoor premises shall be free of hazards including any recalled products.

**Note:** Lists of recalled products are available on the department of agriculture, trade and consumer protection website at <http://datcp.state.wi.us/core/consumer-protection/consumerprotection.jsp> or by contacting the United States consumer products safety commission (US CPSC) at 1-800-638-2772.

(b) Steam radiators, fireplaces, wood burning stoves, electric fans, electric outlets, electrical heating units and hot surfaces, such as pipes, shall be protected by screens or guards so that children cannot touch them.

(c) Firearms, ammunition and other potentially dangerous items may not be kept on the premises.

(d) Materials harmful to children, including power tools, flammable or combustible materials, insecticides, matches, drugs and other articles hazardous or poisonous to children shall be in properly marked containers and stored in areas inaccessible to children.

(e) A motor vehicle shall be immediately available at the center at all times in case of an emergency if a public or private rescue or emergency vehicle cannot arrive at the center within 10 minutes of a phone call.

(f) The center shall have a working telephone or access to a working telephone on the premises during hours of operation, with a list of emergency telephone numbers, including telephone numbers for the local rescue squad, fire department, police department or other law enforcement agency, poison control center and emergency medical service posted near each telephone. In this paragraph, "telephone" does not include a pay telephone requiring payment to reach the operator or a telephone in a locked room.

(g) Stairs, walks, ramps and porches shall be maintained in a safe condition and free from the accumulation of water, ice or snow.

(h) Smoking is prohibited on the premises of the center when the children are present.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.03 (25) for the definition of premises.

(i) A licensee, employee, volunteer or other individual in contact with children may not consume alcoholic beverages or any non-prescribed controlled substances specified in ch. 961, Stats., on the premises of the center or be under the influence of any alcohol or non-prescribed controlled substance, during the hours of the center's operation.

(j) Children may not be allowed in an area where power tools are in use.

(k) A hot tub located in a room or area accessible to children shall have a visible, locked, rigid cover or be enclosed by a locked fence at least 4 feet tall. The lock shall be installed so that the lock is inaccessible to children.

(L) If a hot tub is located in a room or area not intended for use by children, access to the room or area shall be controlled through the use of a visibly locked door. The lock shall be installed so that the lock is inaccessible to children.

(3) **EMERGENCIES.** Each center shall have a written plan for responding to a fire, a tornado, a tornado warning, a missing child or other emergency. A center shall do all of the following:

(a) Post the fire evacuation and tornado plan and practice implementing the fire evacuation plan monthly. Tornado drills shall be conducted monthly from April through October.

(b) Make sure that all staff members know what their duties are if there is a fire, tornado, tornado warning, missing child or other emergency.

(c) Keep a written record of dates and times of all fire and tornado drills practiced.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Fire, Safety and Emergency Response Documentation — Group Child Care Centers, to record dates and times of the monthly fire or tornado practice. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

**(4) FIRE PROTECTION.** (a) Each fire extinguisher on the premises of a center shall be operable at all times, inspected once a year by a qualified person and bear a label indicating its present condition and date of the last inspection.

(b) All staff members shall be instructed in and knowledgeable about the use of the fire extinguishers.

(c) Each floor used by children shall have at least 2 exits.

(d) Exits and exit passageways shall have a minimum clear width of 3 feet and be unobstructed by furniture or other objects.

(e) An extension cord may not be used permanently with an appliance.

(f) No more than 2 electrical appliances may be plugged into any one wall outlet.

(g) The door to the basement and furnace room shall be closed.

(h) Areas under stairs may not be used for storage.

(i) All exit lights shall be lit at all times.

(j) Fire alarms, alarm systems and smoke detectors shall be maintained in good working order. Fire alarms and smoke detectors shall be used to conduct monthly fire evacuation drills. Fire alarms and smoke detectors shall be tested weekly and a record kept of the test results.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Fire, Safety, and Emergency Response Documentation — Group Child Care Centers, to document the results of the weekly testing of fire alarms and smoke detectors. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(k) Unvented gas, oil or kerosene space heaters are prohibited.

**(5) SANITATION.** (a) The premises shall be free from litter, clean and in good repair.

(b) 1. There shall be no flaking or deteriorating paint on exterior or interior surfaces in areas accessible to children.

2. No lead-based paint or other toxic finishing material may be used.

(c) Garbage containers in the building shall be rigid, covered, watertight and emptied daily or more often as needed. Compactors need not be emptied daily. Garbage and refuse stored out of doors shall be kept in leak-proof containers equipped with tight-fitting covers and shall be disposed of as necessary to prevent decomposition or overflow.

(d) Furnishings, toys, cots and other equipment shall be washed or cleaned when they become soiled. Eating surfaces shall be washed and sanitized before and after each use.

(e) 1. Toilet rooms and fixtures shall be in a sanitary condition at all times.

2. Potty chair receptacles shall be emptied and rinsed and the potty chair and receptacle shall be disinfected immediately after each use with a chlorine bleach solution of one tablespoon to one quart of water, made fresh daily.

(f) Windows and doors that are used for ventilation shall be screened.

(g) The premises shall be maintained to prevent the entrance or harborage of vermin.

**(6) WATER.** (a) A safe supply of drinking water shall be available to children at all times from a drinking fountain of the angle

jet type or by use of disposable cups. Common use of drinking cups is prohibited.

(b) If the center gets its water from a private well, the following shall apply:

1. Water samples from the well shall be tested annually for lead and bacteria by a laboratory certified under ch. DHS 165. The laboratory report shall be available to the department upon request.

2. A center serving children under 6 months of age shall have the water tested annually for nitrate levels.

**Note:** Section NR 890.09 sets the maximum allowable level of nitrate-nitrogen in public drinking water at 10 milligrams per liter (10 parts per million).

3. If water test results indicate the water contains high levels of lead or is bacteriologically unsafe, the water shall be appropriately treated and re-tested until it is determined to be safe. Bottled water shall be used until the water is determined to be safe. If the water tests above the maximum allowable level of nitrates, bottled water shall be used for infants under 6 months of age.

**Note:** Centers using a private well that serves at least 25 of the same people over 6 months of the year are considered to have a non-transient non community water system (NTNC) and must be in compliance with Chapter NR 809, Safe Drinking Water Act Standards. Contact the nearest Department of Natural Resources from the list at: [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cs/ServiceCenter/SSbyRegion.html](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cs/ServiceCenter/SSbyRegion.html)

**(7) INDOOR SPACE.** (a) The space used by children shall be no less than 35 square feet of usable floor space for each child, exclusive of passageways, kitchens, bathrooms, coat storage areas, offices, storage areas, isolation quarters, staff room, furnace room, parts of rooms occupied by stationary equipment, and areas not at all times available to children, including areas used exclusively for large muscle activity, napping or eating.

(b) There shall be additional storage space for cots, bedding, supplies and equipment not in use.

**(8) FURNISHINGS.** (a) Furnishings shall be durable and safe, with no sharp, rough, loose or pointed edges.

(b) Tables and seating shall be scaled to the proper height and size for the children's comfort and reach.

(c) 1. Except as provided in subd. 2., in a center where meals are served, seating shall be at least equal to the licensed capacity of the center, excluding infants, so that the children can be served at the same time, and there shall be space at a table for each child.

2. In a center where meals are served in a central lunchroom, seating and tablespace shall be at least equal to the number of children to be served in a shift.

(d) Shelves shall be provided for equipment and supplies in rooms used by children. Equipment and supplies shall be arranged in an orderly fashion so that children may select, use and replace items.

(e) There shall be sufficient storage space for clothing and personal belongings to accommodate the clothing and personal belongings of as many children as are in the licensed capacity of the center. For children 2 years of age and older, the space for outer garment storage shall be at child level.

(f) A safe, washable cot, bed, two-inch thick mat or sleeping bag shall be provided for each child 12 months old or older who naps or sleeps.

(g) A safe, washable crib or playpen shall be provided for use of each child less than 12 months old who naps or sleeps. A crib or playpen shall be washed and disinfected between changes in occupancy.

**Note:** See Appendix D for information on safe cribs and playpens.

**(9) KITCHENS.** (a) *Equipment and utensils.* 1. When meals are prepared or heated on the premises, the kitchen shall be equipped with a microwave or stove with an oven, a refrigerator, a sink and utensils that are necessary to prepare and serve meals. The sink shall be used exclusively for food preparation and dishwashing.

1m. Centers preparing or serving only snacks are not required to have a sink unless dishes or utensils requiring dishwashing are used. Centers preparing or serving only snacks are not required



to have a microwave or stove unless the snacks served require heating. Refrigerators are required if the center serves milk or other perishable snacks.

2. All equipment and utensils shall have smooth, hard surfaces, be easily cleanable, in good repair, durable, non-toxic and free of cracks, seams, chips and roughened areas, and shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

3. Food preparation tables shall be durable, and surfaces shall be smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable.

4. After cleaning, utensils shall be stored in a clean, dry place and protected from contamination.

5. Single-service utensils shall be non-toxic, stored in a clean, dry place, kept covered, and may not be reused.

6. Infant bottles and nipples may not be reused without first being cleaned and sanitized.

(b) *Dishwashing procedures.* 1. All kitchen utensils and food contact surfaces used for preparation, storage or serving of food shall be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after each use.

2. All utensils and dishes shall be scraped, sorted and pre-washed under running water.

3. For manual washing of dishes and utensils, a 3-step procedure shall be used:

a. Wash in water between 110° and 125° F., using an effective soap or detergent.

b. Rinse by immersing dishes and utensils in clean, hot water to remove soap or detergent.

c. Sanitize by submerging dishes and utensils for at least 2 minutes in 1½ teaspoons of bleach per gallon of water or another solution of a sanitizer approved by the department.

4. a. If a center uses a commercial dishwasher to clean dishes and utensils, the dishwasher shall have a readily visible temperature gauge located in the wash compartment. If the dishwasher is a spray type or immersion type dishwasher, a temperature gauge shall also be located in the rinse water line.

b. Wash at 130 degrees Fahrenheit to 150 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 20 seconds, using an effective cleaning agent, and rinse and sanitize at 180 degrees Fahrenheit for 10 seconds or more, using an automatic rinse injector.

c. When using a spray-type dishwashing machine, the dishes and utensils shall be washed, rinsed and sanitized in the dishwasher according to the manufacturer's operating instructions. A chemical sanitizer shall be used in the final rinse.

5. If the center uses a home-type dishwasher to clean dishes and utensils, the dishes and utensils shall be washed and rinsed in the dishwasher and sanitized by submerging dishes and utensils for at least 2 minutes in 1½ teaspoons of bleach per gallon of water or other solution approved by the department.

6. All dishes and utensils shall be air-dried in racks or baskets or on drain boards.

**Note:** A list of approved sanitizers is available from the Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, P.O. Box 2659, Madison, WI 53701-2659.

(c) *Food sources.* 1. Food shall be clean, wholesome, free from spoilage, free from adulteration or misbranding and safe for human consumption. Meat, poultry, fish, molluscan shellfish, eggs and dairy products shall be from an inspected source.

2. Only milk and milk products which are pasteurized and meet the Grade A milk standards of the Wisconsin department of agriculture, trade, and consumer protection may be served or used.

3m. Meals shall be prepared on the premises, in a central kitchen operated by the child care center or in another location that has been inspected by a representative of a state agency.

**Note:** Chapter DHS 196 addresses restaurants and other public eating establishments. Chapter ATCP 75 addresses retail food establishments.

4. Food in dented, bulging or leaking cans, or cans without labels, may not be used.

5. Hermetically sealed, non-acid or low-acid food which has been processed in a place other than a commercial food processing establishment may not be used.

(d) *Food storage.* 1. Foods shall be stored at temperatures which protect against spoilage. The following measures shall be taken to prevent spoilage:

a. Perishable and potentially hazardous food which includes all custard-filled and cream-filled pastries, milk and milk products, meat, fish, shellfish, gravy, poultry stuffing and sauces, dressings, salads containing meat, fish, eggs, milk or milk products, and any other food or food product likely to spoil quickly if not kept at the proper temperature shall be continuously maintained at 40° F. or below or 150° F. or above, as appropriate, except during necessary periods of preparation and service.

b. Each refrigeration unit shall be maintained at 40° F. or lower and each freezing unit shall be maintained at 0° F. or lower.

c. Each cold storage facility shall be equipped with a clearly visible accurate thermometer.

d. Food shall be covered while refrigerated, except when being cooled.

2. Foods not requiring refrigeration shall be stored in clean, dry, ventilated and lighted storerooms or areas which shall be protected from contamination by sewage, wastewater backflow, condensation, leakage or vermin. In addition:

a. Dry foods, such as flour, sugar, cereals and beans shall be stored in bags with zip-type closures or metal, glass or food-grade plastic containers with tight-fitting covers and shall be labeled. In this paragraph, "food grade plastic" means any plastic material used in the manufacture of dishes or utensils which has been found not harmful to human health by the national sanitation foundation.

b. Foods stored in the basement shall be stored at least 8 inches above the floor, and food stored in other areas shall be stored high enough above the floor to provide for air circulation and to facilitate cleaning.

(e) *Cleaning aids.* 1. Poisonous and toxic materials, including cleaning supplies, bleaches and insecticides, shall be labeled and stored in cabinets used for no other purpose and shall be inaccessible to children.

2. Cleaning aids such as mops, broom and buckets shall be clean and shall be stored outside of food preparation or food storage areas.

(f) *Food handling.* 1. Raw fruits and vegetables shall be washed before being served or cooked.

2. Food returned from individual plates or from dining tables shall be discarded.

3. Leftover prepared food which has not been served shall be dated, refrigerated promptly and used within 36 hours, or frozen immediately for later use.

4. Food delivery vehicles shall be equipped with clean containers or cabinets to store food while in transit. Containers for cold food shall be capable of maintaining the temperature at or below 40° F. and containers for hot food shall be capable of maintaining the temperature at or above 150° F.

5. Potentially hazardous frozen foods shall be thawed in the refrigerator, under cold running water or on the defrost setting in a microwave oven. No potentially hazardous frozen food may be thawed by leaving it at room temperature.

(g) *Food service personnel.* 1. Personnel who help prepare meals shall:

a. Be at least 18 years of age.

b. Wear clean clothing and effective hair restraints such as hair nets or caps.

c. Wash their hands with soap and warm running water before starting work, before and after handling food, and after using the toilet. Hands shall be dried with single use towels.

2. No one with an open or infected wound or sore may work in the food preparation area unless the wound or sore is covered and, if it is on a hand, a nonporous glove is worn on that hand.

(10) WASHROOM AND TOILET FACILITIES. (a) A group child care center shall provide at least the number of washbasins and toilets with plumbing indicated in Table 251.06. Urinals may be substituted for up to 1/3 of the total required toilets.

**TABLE 251.06**  
**Minimum Number of Washbasins and Toilets**  
**Required in Group Child Care Centers**

Maximum Number of Children for Which the Center is Licensed	Number of Toilets	Number of Washbasins
9 or 10	1	1
11 to 25	2	1
26 to 40	3	2
41 to 55	4	2
56 to 70	5	3

(b) When a center is licensed for more than 70 children, one additional toilet shall be provided for each additional 15 children or fraction thereof and washbasins shall be provided in the ratio of one for every 2 additional toilets and urinals or fraction thereof.

(c) Children under the age of 30 months need not be included when determining the required fixtures under par. (a). However, in all cases, at least one toilet and one washbasin shall be provided.

(d) If potty chairs are used for children under 30 months of age, the potty chairs shall be provided in a ratio of one for every 4 children or fraction thereof.

(e) Steps or blocks shall be provided if the washbasins and toilets are not proportioned to the size of the children.

(f) Soap, toilet paper, disposable paper towels or blower-type air dryers and a wastepaper container shall be provided and accessible to children using the facilities.

(g) Toilet room door locks shall be openable from the outside and the opening device shall be readily accessible to the staff.

(11) OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE. (a) *Requirement for outdoor play space.* A center shall have outdoor play space if children are present for more than 3 hours per day or if outdoor play is included in the center program.

(b) *Required features of outdoor play space.* Except when an exemption is requested and is approved by the department under par. (c), a center shall comply with all of the following requirements for outdoor play space:

1. The outdoor play space shall be on the premises of the center.
2. There shall be at least 75 square feet of outdoor play space for each child 2 years of age or older using the space at a given time.
3. There shall be at least 35 square feet of outdoor play space for each child under 2 years of age using the space at a given time except as provided in subd. 4.
4. The total outdoor play space of a center shall accommodate not less than 1/3 of the number of children for which the center is licensed or shall be a minimum of 750 square feet, whichever is greater. The number of children under one year of age need not be included for purposes of computing the minimum required outdoor play space if the center provides spaces in wheeled vehicles such as strollers and wagons equal to the number of children under one year of age.
5. An energy-absorbing surface, such as loose sand, pea gravel or pine or bark mulch, in a depth of at least 9 inches is required under climbing equipment, swings and slides and in a fall

zone of 4 feet beyond and whenever play equipment is 4 feet or more in height. Shredded rubber and poured surfacing shall be installed to the manufacturer's specifications based on the height of the equipment.

6. The outdoor play space shall be well-drained and shall be free of hazards such as uncovered wells, cisterns and unused appliances. Structures such as playground equipment, railings, decks and porches accessible to children that have been constructed with CCA treated lumber shall be sealed with an exterior oil based sealant or stain. Wood containing creosote, including railroad ties, may not be accessible to children.

7. The boundaries of the outdoor play space shall be defined by a permanent enclosure not less than 4 feet high to protect the children. Fencing, plants or landscaping may be used to create a permanent enclosure.

8. Concrete and asphalt are prohibited under climbing equipment, swings and slides.

**Note:** The Consumer Products Safety Commission has a publication entitled Handbook for Public Playground Safety, Pub. No. 325 which provides information on playground safety guidelines designed to help child care centers build safe playgrounds. To obtain copies of this publication and a related public playground safety checklist, contact the Consumer Products Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) or 1-800-638-2772.

(c) *Exemption for off-premises play space.* 1. In this paragraph, "main thoroughfare" means a heavily traveled street or road used by vehicles as a principal route of travel.

1m. If a center has no outdoor play space available on the premises of the center, the licensee may request an exemption from the requirements under par. (b) for a center's outdoor play space.

2. A request for an exemption under subd. 1m. shall be in writing and shall be accompanied by a plan for outdoor play space which does all the following:

- a. Identifies and describes the location to be used, the travel distance from the center to that location and the means of transporting the children to that location.
- b. Provides for adequate supervision of the children as specified in Table 251.05-D.
- c. Provides for daily vigorous exercise in the out-of-doors for the children.
- d. Describes the arrangements to meet the toileting and diapering needs of the children.
- e. Affirms the center's compliance with the requirements included in subds. 3. to 6.

**Note:** Send the request for an exemption and the off-premises outdoor play space plan to the appropriate regional office in Appendix A.

3. The off-premises outdoor play space shall be free of hazards such as bodies of water, railroad tracks, unfenced in-ground swimming pools, heavily wooded areas and nearby highways and main thoroughfares.

4. There shall be at least 75 square feet of outdoor play space for each child 2 years of age or older using the space at a given time, and at least 35 square feet of outdoor play space for each child under 2 years of age using the space at a given time.

5. No climbing equipment, swing or slide in the play space may have concrete or asphalt under it.

6. When the off-premises outdoor play space is reached by walking, the center shall transport children under 3 years of age in wheeled vehicles, such as strollers or wagons, with a seating capacity equal to the number of children under 3 years of age to be transported.

7. A center's plan for use of an off-premises outdoor play space is subject to approval by the department. Within 30 days after receipt of a plan and request for an exemption from the requirements of par. (b), the department shall either approve the plan and grant the exemption or not approve the plan and therefore deny the request for exemption. The department shall notify the

center in writing of its decision and, if it does not grant an exemption, shall state its reasons for not granting the exemption.

8. If any circumstance described in an approved plan for use of off-premises outdoor play space changes or if any condition for plan approval is not met or is no longer met, the department may withdraw its approval of the plan and cancel the exemption. A center with an approved plan shall immediately report to the department's licensing representative any significant change in any circumstance described in the plan.

**(12) SWIMMING AREAS.** (a) Above-ground and in-ground swimming pools, and beaches on the premises may not be used by children in care. Swimming pools shall be enclosed by a 6-foot fence with a self-closing, self-latching door. Spaces between the vertical posts of the fence shall be 4 inches or less. Access to a beach shall be restricted by a 6-foot fence.

(b) A wading pool on the premises may be used if the water is changed and the pool is disinfected daily. Supervision and staff-to-child ratio requirements under s. DCF 251.05 (3) and (4) shall be met.

(c) A wading pool, pool, water attraction or beach that is not located on the center premises may be used by children, if all the following conditions are met:

1. The construction and operation of the pool shall meet the requirements of chs. Comm 90 and DHS 172 for public swimming pools. A beach shall comply with any applicable local ordinance.

2. Certified lifesaving personnel shall be on duty.

3. While children are in the water of a pool, wading pool, water attraction or beach, staff-to-child ratios for child care workers who can swim shall be:

a. For children under 3 years of age: 1:1.

b. For children 3 years of age: 1:4.

c. For children 4 and 5 years of age: 1:6.

d. For children 6 years of age and older: 1:12.

4. When a mixed age group of children are swimming, the staff-to-child ratio shall be adjusted based on the number of children in the water and each child's age.

**Note:** A worksheet to help calculate the staff to child ratio for mixed aged groupings during swimming is available from the department. Requests may be made to the licensing representative or regional licensing office listed in Appendix A.

5. A child shall be restricted to the area of the pool or beach that is within the child's swimming ability.

6. If some of the children are in the water and others are not, there shall be at least 2 child care workers supervising the children. One child care worker shall supervise the children who are in the water, and the other child care worker shall supervise children who are not in the water.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; r. and recr. (11), Register, September, 1998, No. 513, eff. 10-1-98; reprinted to restore omitted copy in (11) (b), Register, April, 1999, No. 520; correction in (1) (a) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats.; CR 03-052: am. (title), (1) (a), (2) (h) and (i), (3) (b) and (c), (6) (b) 2., (9) (b) 3. c., 4. b. and (c) 1., (9) (f) 5., (g) 1. c., (10) (a), Table 46.06 (title), (10) (b), (11) (b) 1. and 2. a., (11) (b) 3. and 6. and (c) 2. (intro.), cr. (2) (k) and (L), (6) (b) 3., (9) (c) 3m. and (11) (c) 1m., renum. (11) (b) 2. b. to d. and 3. a. to d. to be (b) 3. to 9., r. and recr. (12) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (6) (b) 1. and (12) (c) 1. made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; CR 07-102: am. (2) (a), (3) (intro.), (a) to (c), (4) (j), (6) (b) 1., 3., (9) (d) 2. a., (10) (f), (11) (a), (b) 5. to 7., (12) (a), (b) and (c) 3., cr. (9) (a) 1m. and (12) (c) 6., r. and recr. (9) (b) 4. and 5., r. (9) (c) 3. and (11) (b) 9., renum. (12) (c) to be (12) (c) (intro.) and am. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09; corrections in (12) (b) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635.

**DCF 251.07 Program.** (1) PROGRAM PLANNING AND SCHEDULING. (a) Each group child care center shall have a written program of activities which are suitable for the developmental level of each child and each group of children. The program shall provide each child with experiences which will promote all of the following:

**Note:** The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are voluntary standards that were designed to help centers develop programs and curriculum to help ensure that children are exposed to activities and opportunities that will prepare them for success in school and into the future. The Standards are primarily intended as guidance on developmentally appropriate expectations and are not intended to be used as a checklist to gauge a child's progress. The Standards are based on scientific research.

Copies of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are available on the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners website at <http://www.collaborating-partners.com/> or through the Child Care Information Center at 1-800-362-7353.

1. Self-esteem and positive self-image.
2. Social interaction.
3. Self-expression and communication skills.
4. Creative expression.
5. Large and small muscle development.
6. Intellectual growth.
7. Literacy.

**Note:** With parental consent and consultation, it is recommended that centers who care for children who have an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP) coordinate programming activities with the local school district or Birth to Three agency.

(b) The program schedule shall be planned to provide a flexible balance each day of:

1. Active and quiet activities.
2. Individual and group activities.
3. Indoor and if the center is in operation more than 3 hours per day, outdoor activities.

(c) Television may be used only to supplement the daily plan for children. No child may be required to watch television. Other activities shall be available.

(d) Routines such as toileting and eating and intervals between activities shall be planned to avoid keeping children waiting in lines or assembled in large groups.

(e) The program shall provide all of the following:

1. Reasonable regularity in eating, napping and other routines.
2. Daily periods when a variety of experiences are concurrently available for the children to select their own activities.
3. Protection from excess fatigue and over stimulation.
4. If a center is in operation for more than 3 hours per day, daily outdoor activities except during inclement weather or when not advisable for health reasons.

(f) Child care workers shall give children individual attention.

(g) A center that is open in the early morning and late afternoon shall have a written plan for activities which meet the individual needs of the children during those time periods. The plan shall include:

1. Provision of opportunities for the children to rest and eat.
2. Use of materials and engagement in activities which for the most part do not duplicate materials or activities planned for the major part of the program.

(h) The program as implemented shall reflect the center's written policies.

**(2) CHILD GUIDANCE.** (a) In this subsection:

1. "Time-out period" means removing the child from the situation in a non-humiliating manner and placing the child in a designated location in order to interrupt the child's unacceptable behavior.

2. "Redirection" means directing the child's attention to a different program activity.

(b) Each child care center shall have a written policy which provides for positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear-cut limits for the children. The policy shall be designed to help a child develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others.

(c) If a center uses time-out periods to deal with unacceptable behavior, time-out periods may not exceed 5 minutes and the procedure shall be included in the center's child guidance policy.

(d) Use of time-out periods is prohibited for children under 3 years of age.

(e) Actions that may be psychologically, emotionally or physically painful, discomfoting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited. Examples of prohibited actions include all of the following:



1. Spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting, throwing or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment.
  2. Verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.
  3. Physical restraint, binding or tying to restrict movement or enclosing in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle.
  4. Withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps.
  5. Actions that are cruel, aversive, frightening or humiliating to the child.
- (f) A child may not be punished for lapses in toilet training.

**Note:** Inappropriate discipline of a child by a staff member must be reported to the department within 24 hours after the occurrence under s. DCF 251.04 (3) (j).

**(3) EQUIPMENT.** (a) Indoor and outdoor play equipment shall be safe. The equipment shall be:

1. Scaled to the developmental level, size and ability of the children.
2. Of sturdy construction with no sharp, rough, loose, protruding, pinching or pointed edges, or areas of entrapment, in good operating condition, and anchored when necessary.
3. Placed to avoid danger of injury or collision and to permit freedom of action.
4. Placed over an energy-absorbing surface, when equipment is 4 feet or more in height.

(b) A center shall provide equipment and supplies according to the following criteria:

1. Child development shall be fostered through selection of a variety of equipment that will:
  - a. Provide large muscle development.
  - b. Provide construction activities and for development of manipulative skills.
  - c. Encourage social interaction.
  - d. Provide intellectual stimulation.
  - e. Encourage creative expression.

2. A center shall provide sufficient indoor play equipment to allow each child a choice of at least 3 activities involving equipment when all children are using equipment.

3. A center shall provide sufficient outdoor play equipment to allow each child at least one activity involving equipment when all children are using equipment.

(c) The quantity of indoor and outdoor play equipment specified in par. (b) 2. and 3. shall be provided based on the maximum licensed capacity of the center.

(d) Equipment and materials which reflect an awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity shall be provided.

**Note:** Information on selecting play equipment is available from the Child Care Information Center, 1-800-362-7353.

(e) Children using play equipment shall be closely supervised to prevent injuries.

(f) Trampolines and inflatable bounce surfaces on the premises shall not be accessible to children and shall not be used by children in care.

**(4) REST PERIODS.** (a) A child under 5 years of age in care for more than 4 hours shall have a nap or rest period.

(b) Child care workers shall permit a child who does not sleep after 30 minutes and a child who awakens to get up and to have quiet time through the use of equipment or activities which will not disturb other children.

(c) Each child who has a nap or rest period shall be provided with an individual bed, cot, sleeping bag, 2 inch thick mat, crib or playpen which is placed at least 2 feet from the next sleeping child. Cribs or cots may be placed end-to-end if a solid partition separates children and an aisle not less than 2 feet in width is maintained between cribs and cots.

(d) Each child shall be provided with an individually identified sheet and blanket or sleeping bag which may be used only by that child until it is washed.

(e) Bedding shall be maintained and stored in a clean and sanitary manner, replaced immediately if wet or soiled and washed at least after every 5 uses.

**(5) MEALS AND SNACKS.** (a) *Food.* 1. Food shall be provided by the center based on the amount of time children are present as specified in Table 251.07.

**TABLE 251.07**

**Meal and Snack Requirements for each Child in a Group Child Care Center**

<b>Time a Child is Present</b>	<b>Number of Meals and Snacks</b>
At least 2½ but less than 4 hours	1 snack
At least 4 but less than 8 hours	1 snack and 1 meal
At least 8 but less than 10 hours	2 snacks and 1 meal
At least 10 or more hours	2 meals and 2 or 3 snacks

2. Center-provided transportation time shall be included in determining the amount of time children are present for the purposes of subd. 1.

3. Food shall be served at flexible intervals, but no child may go without nourishment for longer than 3 hours.

4. Each meal and snack served shall meet the U.S. department of agriculture child care food program minimum meal requirements.

**Note:** See Appendices B and C for information on the U.S. department of agriculture child and adult care food program minimum meal requirements.

5. Menus for meals and snacks provided by the center shall:

- a. Be posted in the kitchen and in a conspicuous place accessible to parents.
- b. Be planned at least one week in advance, dated and kept on file for 3 months.
- c. Be available for review by the department.
- d. Include diverse types of foods.

6. Any changes in a menu as planned shall be recorded on the copies of the menu kept on file and posted for parents.

6m. When snacks are provided by parents for all children, a record of the snack served shall be posted in an area accessible to parents.

7. Enough food shall be prepared for each meal so that second portions of vegetables or fruit, bread and milk are available to children.

8. When food for a child is provided by the child's parent, the center shall provide parents with information about requirements for food groups and quantities specified by the U.S. department of agriculture child care food program minimum meal requirements.

**Note:** See Appendix B and C for information on the U.S. department of agriculture child care food program minimum meal requirements.

9. A special diet, based on a medical condition, excluding food allergies, but including nutrient concentrates and supplements, may be served only upon written instruction of a child's physician and upon request of the parent.

9m. A special diet based on a food allergy may be served upon the written request of the parent.

10. Cooks, staff members, child care workers and substitutes having direct contact with the children shall be informed about food allergies and other allergies of specific children.

(b) *Mealtime.* 1. Staff shall sit at the table with the children during mealtime.

2. Meals shall be served with time allowed for socialization.

**(6) HEALTH.** (a) *Observation.* 1. Each child upon arrival at a center shall be observed by a staff person for symptoms of illness

and injury. For an apparently ill child, the procedure under par. (c) shall be followed.

2. Any injury to a child or evidence of unusual bruises, contusions, lacerations or burns received by a child in or out of center care shall be recorded in a medical log book and reported immediately to the administrator or other person in charge of the center.

(b) *Isolation.* A center shall have an isolation area for the care of children who appear to be ill. If the area is not a separate room, it shall be separated from space used by other children by a partition, screen or other means.

(c) *Ill child procedure.* The following procedures shall apply when a child with an illness or condition, such as vomiting or diarrhea, having the potential to affect the health of other persons is observed in the child care center:

1. The child shall be isolated.

2. The child in the isolation area shall be provided with a bed, crib or cot and a sheet and blanket or sleeping bag, with a staff member within sight and hearing of the child, except that for sessions of up to 4 hours a kindergarten mat may be provided for the isolation room instead of a bed, crib or cot. Isolation shall be used until the child can be removed from the center.

3. The child's parent, or a designated responsible person when a parent cannot be reached, shall be contacted as soon as possible after the illness is discovered, and arrangements shall be made for removal of the child from the center.

(d) *Care of a mildly ill child.* A child who is mildly ill may be cared for at the center when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The space for the care of a mildly ill child shall be a self-contained room and shall be separate from children who are well.

2. The room shall have a sink with hot and cold running water.

3. The parent consents in writing.

4. The written health policy of the center allows a mildly ill child to remain at the center.

5. The center follows and implements procedures in a written plan for the provision of care to mildly ill children approved and signed by a licensed physician, or a pediatric or family nurse practitioner which covers all of the following:

a. Admissions and exclusions.

b. Staffing.

c. Staff training.

d. Monitoring and evaluation.

e. Programming.

f. Infectious disease control.

g. Emergency procedures.

6. Medical consultation is available from a physician or local health department in establishing policy for the management of mildly ill children.

(e) *Communicable disease.* 1. A child with a reportable communicable disease specified in ch. DHS 145 may not be admitted to or be permitted to remain in a child care center during the period when the disease is communicable.

2. When it is determined that a person in contact with children or a child enrolled in a child care center has a reportable communicable disease under ch. DHS 145, such as German measles, infectious hepatitis, measles, mumps, or meningitis, the local public health officer, the department and the parents of exposed children shall be notified.

3. An employee, volunteer or a child may be readmitted to the group child care center if there is a statement from a physician that the condition is no longer contagious or if the person has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest usual incubation period for the disease as specified by the department.

**Note:** The Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, has developed materials that identify those communicable diseases that are required to be reported to the local public health officer. These materials also provide addi-

tional guidance on the symptoms of each disease and information on how long an infected child must be excluded from the center. The materials include a communicable disease chart and exclusion guidelines for child care centers. Copies of the communicable disease chart or the exclusion guidelines for child care centers are available from the Child Care Information Center at 800-362-7353.

(f) *Medications.* 1. Center staff may give prescription or non-prescription medication, such as pain relievers, teething gels or cough syrup, to a child only under the following conditions:

a. A written authorization that includes the child's name and birthdate, name of medication, administration instructions, medication intervals and length of the authorization dated and signed by the parent is on file. Blanket authorizations that exceed the length of time specified on the label are prohibited.

**Note:** The department's form, Authorization to Administer Medication — Child Care Centers, is used to obtain the parent's authorization to provide medications. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

b. The medication is in the original container and labeled with the child's name and the label includes the dosage and directions for administration.

c. A written record, including type of medication given, dosage, time, date and the name or initials of the person administering the medication, shall be made in the center medical log book on the same day that the medication is administered.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.04 (6) (c) on maintaining a center medical log book.

2. Sunscreen and insect repellent may only be applied upon the written authorization of the parent. The authorization shall include the ingredient strength of the sunscreen or repellent. Authorizations shall be reviewed every 6 months and updated as necessary. If sunscreen or insect repellent is provided by the parent, the sunscreen or repellent shall be labeled with the child's name. The recording of the application of sunscreen or insect repellent is not necessary.

3. Medication shall be stored so that it is not accessible to the children.

4. Medication requiring refrigeration shall be kept in the refrigerator in a separate, covered container clearly labeled "medication".

5. All medication for a child in care shall be administered by the center as directed on the label and as authorized by the parent.

6. No medication intended for use by a child in the care of the center may be kept at the center without a current medication administration authorization from the parent.

(g) *Health precautions.* 1. Bodily secretions such as runny noses, eye drainage and coughed-up matter shall be wiped with a disposable tissue used once and placed in a plastic-lined container. Whoever does the wiping shall wash his or her hands immediately.

2. Bodily secretions on surfaces shall be washed with soap and water and disinfected with a bleach solution of one tablespoon bleach to one quart of water, made fresh daily. Hands shall be washed immediately.

3. Children shall be protected from sunburn with protective clothing, if not protected by sunscreen.

4. Children shall be clothed to assure body warmth and comfort.

(h) *Universal precautions.* 1. Center staff shall adopt universal precautions when exposed to blood and blood-containing body fluids and injury discharges of all children.

2. All persons exposed to blood or blood-containing body fluids and tissue discharges shall wash their hands immediately with soap and warm running water.

3. Single use disposable gloves shall be worn if there is contact with blood-containing body fluids or tissue discharges. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves. Gloves shall be discarded in plastic bags.

4. For spills of vomitus, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, center staff shall clean and disinfect the floors, walls, bath-

rooms, tabletops, toys, kitchen countertops and diaper changing tables.

(i) *Personal cleanliness.* 1. A child's hands shall be washed with soap and warm running water before meals and snacks and after toileting or diapering. A child's hands and face shall be washed after meals.

2. Persons working with children shall wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling food, and after assisting with toileting and after wiping bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue.

3. Cups, eating utensils, toothbrushes, combs and towels may not be shared and shall be kept in a sanitary condition.

4. Wet or soiled clothing and diapers shall be changed promptly from an available supply of clean clothing.

5. Applicable rules under s. DCF 251.09 (4) shall apply to child care workers when children 2 years of age and older require attention for diapering and toileting.

6. If running water is not immediately available when outdoors or on field trips, soap and water-based wet wipes may be used. When running water becomes available, hands must be washed immediately with soap and running water.

7. Disinfecting hand sanitizers may not replace the use of soap and water when washing hands.

(j) *Injuries.* 1. Written permission from the parent to call a child's physician or refer the child for medical care in case of injury shall be on file at the center. The center shall contact the parent as soon as possible after an emergency has occurred or, if the injury is minor, when the parent picks up the child.

2. A center shall identify a planned source of emergency medical care, such as a hospital emergency room, clinic or other constantly staffed facility, and shall advise parents about the designated emergency medical facility.

3. A center shall establish and follow written procedures for bringing a child to an emergency medical care facility and for treatment of minor injuries.

4. First aid procedures shall be followed for serious injuries.

5. Each center shall have a supply of bandages, tape, and Band-Aids.

6. Superficial wounds shall be cleaned with soap and water only and protected with a bandaid or bandage.

7. Suspected poisoning shall be treated only after consultation with a poison control center.

8. A daily record of injuries shall be kept in the medical log book.

9. Records of injuries shall be reviewed by the director or designated person with staff every 6 months in order to ensure that all possible preventive measures are being taken. There shall be documentation in the medical log book that reviews have taken place.

**Note:** See s. DCF 251.04 (6) (c) on maintaining a medical log book.

(k) *Health examination and history.* 1. Each child under 2 years of age shall have an initial health examination not more than 6 months prior to nor 3 months after being admitted to a center, and a follow-up health examination at least once every 6 months thereafter.

2. Each child 2 years of age and older shall have an initial health examination not more than one year prior to nor later than 3 months after being admitted to the center, and a follow-up health examination at least once every 2 years thereafter. School-age children are not required to have a health exam.

3. The health examination report shall be on a form provided by the department and shall be signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or HealthCheck provider.

**Note:** The department's form, Child Health Report — Child Care Centers, is used to record health examination information. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

**Note:** A HealthCheck provider is a medical professional associated with or employed by an outpatient hospital facility, a health maintenance organization, a visiting nurse association, a clinic operated under a physician's supervision, a local public health agency, a home health agency, a rural health clinic, an Indian health agency or a neighborhood health center.

4. The health examination requirement under subd. 1. or 2. does not apply if the parent of a child requests in writing that the department grant an exemption based upon the parent's adherence to religious belief in exclusive use of prayer or spiritual means for healing in accordance with the teachings of a bona fide religious sect or denomination.

5. A child's health history on a form prescribed by the department completed by the child's parent shall be on file at the center by the first day of attendance. Information contained on the health history form shall be shared with any child care worker assigned to care for the child.

**Note:** The department's form, Health History and Emergency Care Plan, is used to record a child's health history. Information on how to obtain the form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(L) *Immunization.* The center shall maintain a record of immunizations for each child to document compliance with s. 252.04, Stats., and ch. DHS 144.

**Note:** The form, Day Care Immunization Record, may be used to record immunization information. An electronic printout from the Wisconsin Immunization Registry or other registry maintained by a health care provider may be used in place of the Day Care Immunization Record. Information on how to obtain the form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(7) **PETS AND ANIMALS.** (a) Animals shall be maintained in good health and appropriately immunized against rabies. Rabies vaccinations shall be documented with a current certificate from a veterinarian.

**Note:** Service animals used to assist persons with a disability are not considered pets when they are used as a service animal.

(b) Animals that pose any risk to the children shall be restricted from the indoor and outdoor areas used by children.

(c) Licensees shall ensure that parents are aware of the presence of pets and animals in the center. If pets and animals are allowed to roam in areas of the center occupied by children, written acknowledgement from the parents shall be obtained. If pets are added after a child is enrolled, parents shall be notified in writing prior to the pets' addition to the center.

(d) Reptiles, amphibians, turtles, ferrets, poisonous animals, psittacine birds, exotic and wild animals may not be accessible to children.

**Note:** Psittacine birds are hooked-billed birds of the parrot family that have 2 toes forward and 2 toes backward and include parrots, macaws, grays, lovebirds and cockatoos.

(e) All contact between pets or animals and children shall be under the close supervision of a child care worker who is close enough to remove the child immediately if the pet or animal shows signs of distress or the child shows signs of treating the pet or animal inappropriately.

(f) Pets in classrooms shall be confined in cages while food is being prepared or served in the classroom. Pets, cages and litter boxes are prohibited in kitchens, lunch rooms, and food storage areas. Pet and animal feeding dishes, excluding water dishes, and litter boxes may not be placed in areas accessible to children.

(g) Indoor and outdoor areas accessible to children shall be free of animal excrement.

(h) If dogs or cats are allowed in areas of the center accessible to children, the certificate of insurance required under s. DCF 251.04 (2) (g) shall indicate the number and types of pets covered by the insurance.

(i) Licensees shall ensure that the center is in compliance with all applicable local ordinances regarding the number, types and health status of pets or animals.

(8) **MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES.** A center which includes in its program watercraft, riflery, archery or horseback riding shall



comply with the applicable requirements under s. DCF 252.44 (8), (9) and (11).

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: am. (1) (a) (intro.), (2) (b) and (e) (intro.), 1. and 3., Table 46.07 (title), (5) (a) 9., (6) (d) 5. (intro.), (e) 1., 2. and 3., (f) 1., a. and c., (6) (j) 5. and 9. and (k) 5., cr. (5) (a) 9m. and (6) (f) 2., renum. (6) (f) 2. and 3. to be 3. and 4., r. and recr. (7) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (6) (e), (i) 5., (L), (7) (h) and (8) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: am. (1) (a), (2) (e) (intro.), 1., (4) (b), (5) (a) 5. (intro.), (6) (a) 2., (c) (intro.), (e) 2., 3., (f) 1. (intro.), c., 2., (g) 3., (j) 8., 9., (k) 1., 2. and (7) (f), cr. (1) (a) 7., (2) (e) 5., (3) (f), (5) (a) 6m., (6) (f) 5., 6., (i) 6. and 7. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.**

**DCF 251.08 Transportation. (1) APPLICABILITY.** This section applies to all center-provided transportation of children, including both regularly scheduled transportation to and from the center and transportation for field trips that are under the auspices of the center.

**(2) GENERAL.** (a) The center shall be responsible for a child during the time the child is placed in a vehicle until the child reaches his or her destination and is released to a person responsible for the child.

(b) The following emergency information shall be carried in the vehicle for each child transported:

1. An address and telephone number where a parent or other adult can be reached in an emergency.

2. The name, address, and telephone number of the child's physician or medical facility.

3. Written consent from the child's parent for emergency medical treatment.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Transportation Permission — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to obtain consent of the child's parent for emergency medical treatment. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(c) Smoking is prohibited in the vehicle while children are being transported.

(d) The center administrator shall submit a copy of any accident report to the department within 5 days after the occurrence of an accident involving a vehicle transporting children.

**(3) DRIVER.** (a) The driver of a center-provided vehicle shall be or have all of the following:

1. At least 18 years of age.

2. A valid Wisconsin operator's license for the type of vehicle driven.

3. At least one year of experience as a licensed driver.

(b) The licensee shall obtain a copy annually of the driving record for each driver of a center-provided vehicle and shall place the record in the staff file. The licensee shall review each driving record to ensure that the driver has no accidents or traffic violations that would indicate that having children ride with the driver could pose a threat to the children.

**Note:** Information on how to obtain driver license records can be obtained by contacting the Department of Transportation at 608-261-2566 or <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/drivers/points/abstract.htm>.

(c) A driver whose driving record poses a threat to the children may not transport children.

**(4) VEHICLE.** (a) A vehicle used to transport children shall be:

1. Registered in Wisconsin.

2. Clean, uncluttered and free of obstructions on the floors, aisles and seats.

3. Enclosed. Children may not be transported in a truck except in the cab.

(b) 1. Each child who is under 1 year of age or who weighs less than 20 pounds shall be properly restrained in a rear-facing individual child car safety seat when being transported in a vehicle as specified in s. 347.48, Stats.

2. Each child who is at least 1 year of age but less than 4 years of age or who weighs at least 20 pounds but less than 40 pounds shall be properly restrained in a forward-facing individual child

car safety seat when being transported in a vehicle as specified in s. 347.48, Stats.

3. Each child who is at least 4 years of age but less than 8 years, weighing not more than 80 pounds or taller than 4 feet 9 inches shall be properly restrained in a shoulder-positioning child booster seat when being transported in a vehicle as specified in s. 347.48, Stats.

4. Each child who is not required to be transported in an individual child car safety seat or booster seat when being transported in a vehicle shall be properly restrained by a seat belt. Each adult in the vehicle shall be properly restrained by a seat belt. Seat belts may not be shared.

5. Children transported in school buses or vehicles built to school bus standards shall be properly seated according to the manufacturer's specifications.

(c) Passenger doors shall be locked at all times when a vehicle transporting children is moving.

(d) Children under age 13 may not ride in the front seat of a vehicle.

**(5) VEHICLE CAPACITY AND SUPERVISION.** (a) Children may not be left unattended in a vehicle.

(b) When children are transported in a vehicle, there shall be at least one adult supervisor in addition to the driver in either of the following circumstances:

1. There are more than 3 children who are either under 2 years of age or have a disability which limits their ability to respond in an emergency.

2. There are more than 10 children under 5 years of age in the vehicle.

(c) After transporting a child to his or her destination, an adult shall wait until the child enters the building or is in the custody of an adult designated by the parent, unless otherwise authorized by the parent of a school-age child.

(d) A seat in the vehicle shall be provided for each child. In a vehicle not required to have seat belts, the manufacturer shall determine the capacity of the vehicle.

(e) The center shall develop and implement a procedure to ensure that all children exit the vehicle after being transported to a destination.

**(6) REGULARLY SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION.** (a) When regularly scheduled transportation is provided by a center, the center shall maintain the following information in writing at the center and in each vehicle:

1. A list of children transported.

2. The transportation route and scheduled stops.

3. The name and address of the person authorized to receive a child if the child is dropped off at a place other than the child's residence.

4. Procedures to be followed when the parent or designated authorized adult is not at home to receive the child.

(b) The center shall maintain written safety precautions to be followed and implemented when transporting children with disabilities or children who have a limited ability to respond in an emergency.

(c) When transportation services are contracted or chartered, the name, address and telephone number of the contracting firm and the name of a representative of the firm who may be contacted after hours shall be on file at the center.

**(7) CENTER VEHICLES.** (a) A center-provided vehicle shall be in safe operating condition. Except for licensed contract motor carrier vehicles, the licensee shall provide the department evidence of the vehicle's safe operating condition at 12-month intervals on a form the department provides. Licensed contract motor carrier vehicles shall comply with all applicable standards for those vehicles.

**Note:** The department's form, Vehicle Safety Inspection, is used to record evidence of the vehicle's safe operating condition. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(b) A center-provided vehicle, other than a licensed contract motor carrier, shall be equipped with a first aid kit.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: r. and recr. (3) and (7), am. (4) (b) and (5) (d), cr. (4) (d) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; **CR 07-102: am. (1), (3) (b), (4) (d), (5) (b) 1. and (6) (b), r. and recr. (2) (a), cr. (3) (c), (4) (b) 2. to 5. and (5) (e), renum. (4) (b) to be (4) (b) 1. and am. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.**

**DCF 251.09 Additional requirements for infant and toddler care. (1) APPLICABILITY AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) Group child care centers providing care and supervision to infants and toddlers shall comply with the additional requirements of this section.

(am) Prior to admission, an interview shall be conducted with a child's parent or guardian to obtain written information which will aid child care workers in individualizing the program of care for the child. Information shall include all of the following:

1. Schedule of meals and feeding.
2. Types of food introduced and timetable for new foods.
3. Toileting and diapering procedures.
4. Sleep and nap schedule.
5. The child's way of communicating and being comforted.
6. Developmental and health history.

**Note:** The licensee may use the department's form, Intake for Child Under 2 Years — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form to record information for individualizing the program of care for each child. Information on how to obtain the department's form is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

(b) Admission information for an infant or toddler shall be on file in the room or area to which the child is assigned and shall be known to the child care worker.

(c) Child care workers shall document changes in a child's development and routines every 3 months based on discussion with the parent.

(d) Each infant and toddler shall be cared for by a regularly assigned child care worker in a specific self-contained room or area. Infants and toddlers may not be transferred to the care of another child care worker or another group or room in order to adjust group sizes or staff-to-child ratios, except under one of the following circumstances:

1. During the first 2 hours and the last 2 hours of center operation.
2. When the number of children in a group is one or 2 children to one child care worker.

(e) The regularly assigned child care teacher and assistant child care teacher for each group of infants and toddlers shall have a minimum of 10 hours of training in infant and toddler care approved by the department within 6 months after assuming the position. If the training is not part of the required entry-level training under s. DCF 251.05 (1) (d) or (e), it shall be obtained through continuing education.

(f) Infants and toddlers are restricted to first floors and ground floors having direct grade-level exits unless the building is in compliance with all applicable building codes that permit children to be cared for on other levels. The building inspection report on file with the licensing office shall indicate that children under 2 years of age may be cared for on other levels of the center.

(g) Safety gates shall be provided at open stairways.

(h) For centers licensed on or after January 1, 2009, the space occupied by cribs shall be deducted in determining the 35 square feet space requirement under s. DCF 251.06 (7) (a) for each child.

(i) The number of children under one year of age admitted at any one time may not exceed the number of cribs and playpens.

(j) Cribs and playpens shall contain a tight fitting mattress and any mattress covering shall fit snugly over the mattress. Water beds may not be used by children under age 2.

(k) Sheets or blankets used to cover the child shall be tucked tightly under the mattress and shall be kept away from the child's mouth and nose.

(L) Children under one year of age may not sleep in a crib or playpen that contains soft materials such as sheepskins, pillows, fluffy blankets, bumper pads or stuffed animals.

**(2) DAILY PROGRAM.** (a) Child care workers shall respond promptly to a crying child's needs.

(b) Each infant and each toddler shall be allowed to form and follow his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking.

(bm) Each child under one year of age shall be placed to sleep on his or her back in a crib unless otherwise specified in writing by the child's physician. The child shall be allowed to assume the position most comfortable to him or her when able to roll over unassisted.

(c) Emphasis in activities shall be given to play as a learning and growth experience.

(d) Throughout the day each infant and each toddler shall receive physical contact and attention such as being held, rocked, talked to, sung to and taken on walks inside and outside the center.

(e) Routines relating to activities such as taking a nap, eating, diapering and toileting shall be used as occasions for language development and other learning experiences.

(f) When a non-mobile child is awake, the child care worker shall change the child's body position and location in the room periodically. Non-mobile children who are awake shall be placed in on their stomach occasionally throughout the day.

(g) The non-walking child who can creep or crawl shall be given opportunities during each day to move freely by creeping and crawling in a safe, clean, open, warm and uncluttered area.

(h) Child care workers shall encourage infants and toddlers to play with a wide variety of safe toys and objects.

(i) Infants and toddlers shall be taken outdoors for part of each day except during inclement weather or when this is not advisable for health reasons.

(j) Equipment shall be provided to take infants and toddlers out of doors for a walk.

(k) An adult-size rocking chair or other adult-size chair shall be provided for each child care worker for the purpose of holding and rocking children.

**(3) FEEDING.** (a) Child care workers shall do all of the following:

1. Feed each infant and each toddler on the child's own feeding schedule.

2. Ensure that food and formula brought from home are labeled with the child's name and dated, and are refrigerated if required.

3. Ensure that formula prepared by the center is of the commercial, iron-enriched type and mixed according to the manufacturer's directions.

4. Except as provided in subd. 6., provide formula or breast milk to all children under 12 months of age.

6. Provide a type of milk other than a type under subd. 4., or a milk substitute, only on the written direction of the child's physician.

7. Discard leftover milk or formula after each feeding and rinse bottles after use.

8. Offer drinking water to infants and toddlers several times daily.

9. Hold a child unable to hold a bottle whenever a bottle is given. Bottles may not be propped.

10. Cover, date and refrigerate commercial baby food containers which are opened and foods prepared in the center which are stored. If not used within 36 hours, leftover food shall be discarded.

11. Hold or place a child too young to sit in a high chair in an infant seat during feeding. Wide-based high chairs, hook-on chairs or infant seats with safety straps shall be provided for children who are not developmentally able to sit at tables and chairs.

12. Encourage children to experiment with self-feeding with their hands and spoons. Eating utensils and cups shall be scaled to the size and developmental level of the children.

13. Offer a variety of nourishing foods to each child, such as cereal, vegetables, fruit, egg yolks and meat, according to the child's developmental level and the parent's feeding schedule.

14. Refrain from feeding a child directly from commercial food containers.

15. Refrain from heating breast milk in a microwave oven.

(b) Procedures for heating infant formula, milk and food in a microwave oven shall be posted near the microwave oven. Child care workers shall follow the posted procedures for heating food, milk and formula.

**(4) DIAPERING AND TOILETING.** (a) Child care workers shall do all of the following:

1. Plan toilet training in cooperation with the parent so that a child's toilet routine is consistent between the center and the child's home, except that no routine attempts may be made to toilet train a child under 18 months of age.

2. Change wet or soiled diapers and clothing promptly.

3. Change each child on an easily cleanable surface which is cleaned with soap and water and a disinfectant solution after each use with a chlorine bleach solution of one tablespoon bleach to one quart of water, made fresh daily, or a quaternary ammonia product prepared in accordance with label directions.

**Note:** A quaternary ammonia product is any of a group of compounds in which a central nitrogen atom is joined to four organic radicals and one acid radical, used as antiseptics and disinfectants. Benzalkonium chloride, dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride, and dodecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride are the names of some common ammonium compounds that might identify a product as a quaternary ammonium product. The chemical name for bleach is sodium hypochlorite.

4. If the diapering surface is above floor level, provide a barrier or restraint to prevent falling. A child may not be left unattended on the diapering surface.

5. Place disposable soiled diapers and gloves, if used, in a plastic-lined, hands-free, covered container immediately.

6. Place parent-supplied soiled cloth diapers in labeled plastic bags which are kept separate from other clothing.

7. Place center-supplied soiled cloth diapers in a plastic-lined, covered container for washing by a commercial diaper service.

8. Remove soiled diapers from containers as needed but at least daily for washing or disposal. Containers shall be washed and disinfected daily.

9. Wash hands with soap and running water before and after each diapering or assistance with toileting routines. For children under one year, hands may be washed with soap and a fabric or paper washcloth.

10. Apply lotions, powders or salves to a child during diapering only at the specific written direction of the child's parent or the child's physician. The directions on use shall be posted in the diaper changing area. Recording the use of lotions, powders or salves during diapering in the medical log book is not required.

11. Wash the child's diaper area before each diapering with a disposable or fabric towel used only once.

(b) Each self-contained classroom or area serving infants or toddlers who are diapered shall have a sink with hot and cold running water which is not used for food preparation or dishwashing within the room or area.

(c) There shall be a solid barrier between the diapering area and any food preparation area.

(d) There shall be a supply of dry and clean clothing and diapers sufficient to meet the needs of all the children at the center.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: renum. (1) (a) to be (am), am. (1) (title) and (intro.), (f), (2) (f) and (3) (a) 4., cr. (1) (j) to (L) and (2) (bm), r. (3) (a) 5. Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (1) (e) and (h) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: am. (1) (d) (intro.), 1., 2., (h), (4) (a) 3., 5. and 10. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.**

**DCF 251.095 Exceptions and additional requirements for care of school-age children. (1) APPLICABILITY.**

This section applies to group child care centers that serve only school-age children and group child care centers that serve school-age children in groups separate from children who are under 5 years of age. This section does not apply to group child care centers where school-age children are served in groups with children under 5 years of age.

**(2) EXCEPTIONS FOR GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS SERVING ONLY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN.** All requirements under ss. DCF 251.04 to 251.08 and 251.11 apply to group child care centers serving school-age children except for the following requirements:

(a) Section DCF 251.06 (2) (b) but only in regard to protection of electrical outlets.

(b) Section DCF 251.06 (8) (d) and (e) relating to shelves and storage space for clothing and personal belongings.

(c) Section DCF 251.06 (11) (b) 7. concerning a permanent enclosure of outdoor space. If hazards exist, such as traffic or bodies of water, the boundaries of outdoor play space shall be made known to the children.

(d) Section DCF 251.05 (1) (e) 2., relating to training for assistant child care teachers.

(e) Section DCF 251.05 (3) (b), relating to supervision of children, does not apply to children 8 years of age and older in the child care center.

**(3) EXCEPTIONS FOR GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS SERVING ONLY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS.** The following requirements do not apply to group child care centers serving only school-age children in school buildings currently in use as school buildings:

(a) Section DCF 251.05 (1) (e) 2., relating to training for assistant child care teachers.

(b) Section DCF 251.06 (1) (a) on maintaining a building inspection report.

(c) Section DCF 251.06 (4) (a) on fire extinguishers.

(d) Section DCF 251.06 (4) (j) on testing smoke detectors and fire alarms.

(dm) Section DCF 251.06 (5) (c) on the requirement that garbage containers be covered. All other requirements of this section shall be met.

(e) Section DCF 251.06 (6) (b) on testing well water.

**Note:** The requirements in pars. (b) to (e) do not apply to centers serving only school-age children in school buildings because school buildings are covered in chs. Comm 61 to 65 and NR 109.

**(4) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS SERVING SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN.** (a) *Supervision.* 1. A center serving school-age children is responsible for the health, safety and well-being of a child between the time the child arrives at the center and the time the child is released to the parent or to another activity which is specifically authorized in writing by the parent.

2. The center shall have on file an agreement, signed by the parent, which specifies the attendance schedule to be followed and authorizes the child's release to activities away from the center.

**Note:** The licensee may use either the department's form, Alternate Arrival/Release Agreement — Child Care Centers, or the licensee's own form for securing the parent's signed agreement. Information on how to obtain the department's form is



available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

3. School-age children 8 years of age and older may be authorized by staff to participate in center-sponsored activities in the child care center away from direct supervision by center staff.

5. School-age children 8 years of age and older may move between groups if a tracking method is implemented to ensure that child care workers know the whereabouts of each child assigned to the worker's care.

(b) *Staff qualifications.* 1. The administrator of a center serving only school-age children shall meet the requirements in s. DCF 251.05 (1) (d) 2. or department-approved experience, credits or courses in elementary education, physical education, child guidance or recreation or other department-approved training.

2. A center director or child care teacher of a center serving only school-age children shall meet the requirements of s. DCF 251.05 (1) (e) or (f), as appropriate, or shall substitute for those requirements department-approved experience, credits or approved courses in elementary education, physical education, child guidance, recreation or other department-approved training.

3. Each assistant child care teacher shall meet the requirements in s. DCF 251.05 (1) (g) or shall have satisfactorily completed at least 10 hours of training approved by the department in the care of school-age children within 6 months after assuming the position.

(c) *Program.* A center serving school-age children shall have a planned program which provides a change from the routine of school through provision of:

1. Rest and quiet areas.
2. Recreational activities, including outdoor and active play.
3. Freedom for children to select and plan their own activities.

(d) *Meals and snacks.* 1. Children enrolled in school who are attending the center when a meal or snack is served shall be offered the meal or snack.

2. School-age children present after school shall be served a snack.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; correction in (2) (c) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, April, 1999, No. 520; CR 03-052; renun. from HFS 46.10 and am. (1), (2) (intro.), (c), (3) (intro.) and cr. (3) (dm) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (2), (3) and (4) (b) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; CR 07-102; am. (2) (intro.), (c), (e), (4) (a) 3., (b) 1. and 3., cr. (4) (a) 5. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09; correction in (4) (b) 3. made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635.

### DCF 251.10 Additional requirements for night care.

(1) **APPLICABILITY.** Group child care centers which operate during any period of time between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. shall comply with the additional requirements of this section.

(2) **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.** (a) A center offering night care may serve no more than 20 children at any one time between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. unless the building is equipped with emergency lighting supplied by a stand-by power source.

(b) When the same premises are used for the operation of both day care and night care, the number of children during any overlapping of the day care and night care periods may not exceed the maximum licensed capacity of the center.

(c) Minimum staff-child ratios and group sizes as specified in s. DCF 251.05 (4) shall be maintained during night care.

(d) All child care workers on duty shall remain awake, available, within call and able to respond to the needs of the children during night care.

(e) The parent or center shall provide each child in night care with an individually labeled sleeping garment and a toothbrush.

(3) **PROGRAM.** (a) Child care staff shall work with a child's parent to coordinate how the child spends his or her time during night care at the center with the family's schedule.

(b) A center offering night care shall provide a self-contained room away from sleeping children where an awake child can engage in activities.

(c) An evening and morning schedule of program activities shall be planned for the hours that children in night care are awake.

(d) School-age children shall have an opportunity to read or do school work.

(4) **PREVENTIVE MEASURES.** (a) Child care workers shall be given training in techniques of evacuating sleeping children in an emergency during orientation to the job.

(b) Centers operating during hours of darkness shall provide emergency lighting, such as an operable flashlight, for each self-contained room used by children.

(c) Fire evacuation drills shall be practiced during night care hours at least 2 times per year.

(5) **FEEDING.** (a) Breakfast shall be served to all children in care for the night, unless the parent specifies otherwise.

(b) A nighttime snack shall be available to all children in care.

(c) A child present at the time the evening meal is served shall be served the evening meal.

(6) **SLEEP.** (a) Children who attend the center for the evening hours but not the whole night shall have an opportunity to sleep, as needed.

(b) Sleep routines for individual children shall be based on information provided by the parents.

(c) A bed, crib or cot with sheets and blankets or a sleeping bag, individual to each child, shall be provided in night care.

(d) The center shall maintain a supply of extra sleeping garments and bedding for emergencies and accidents.

(e) Children under 2 years of age in night care shall sleep in cribs.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052; renun. from HFS 46.11, am. (1) and (2) (d) Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; correction in (2) (c) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; CR 07-102; cr. (4) (c) Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.

### DCF 251.11 Licensing administration. (1) GENERAL

**CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL OF LICENSE.** (a) A facility that provides care on a regular basis to 9 or more children under the age of 7 years shall be deemed to be providing care for compensation and shall be licensed as a group child care center.

(b) Prior to receiving a license, an applicant for a license under this chapter shall complete all application forms truthfully and accurately and pay all fees and forfeitures due to the department.

(c) The department may refuse to issue or continue a license if another center operated by the licensee is in substantial non-compliance with the licensing rules or has any outstanding fine or forfeitures.

(d) Persons licensed to operate a group child care center shall be responsible, mature individuals who are fit and qualified. In determining whether an applicant is fit and qualified, the department shall consider any history of civil or criminal violations or other offenses substantially related to the care of children by the applicant, owner, manager, representative, employee, center resident or other individual directly or indirectly participating in the operation of the group child care center. A determination of being unfit and unqualified includes substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect under ch. 48, Stats., or substantiated abuse under ch. 50, Stats., or under similar statutes in another state or territory whether or not it results in a criminal charge or conviction.

(e) The department shall issue a group child care license to an applicant within 60 working days after receipt and department approval of a properly completed application, satisfactory department investigation and determination that the applicant is fit and qualified. Continued licensure requires a licensee to remain fit and qualified.

(f) If the department has reason to believe that the physical or mental health of any person associated with the care of children

at the center or any household resident of the center might endanger children in care, the department may require that a written statement be submitted by a physician or, if appropriate, by a licensed mental health professional that shall certify the condition of the individual and the possible effect of that condition on the group child care center or the children in care.

(g) The department may deny or revoke the license if the examination specified under par. (f) gives the department reasonable concern for the care of children.

(h) The department may not process an application for a license if the applicant has had a license or certification to operate a child care center revoked or denied within the last 2 years. An applicant is deemed ineligible to submit an application for a license and a licensee may not hire an employee within 2 years from the date an applicant or employee had a child care license revoked or denied.

(i) The department shall consider a licensee who fails to submit any of the materials described in sub. (3) or (4) by the expiration or continuation date of a license to have surrendered his or her license and to no longer hold title to the license. The former licensee may not continue to operate the child care center.

**(2) INITIAL APPLICATION FOR A PROBATIONARY LICENSE.** (a) An applicant for a license shall participate in pre-licensing technical assistance towards the completion of the initial licensing study checklist with a representative of the department prior to submitting an application for a license.

**Note:** 1. Information on how to obtain pre-licensing technical assistance is available from the appropriate Division of Early Care and Education regional office in Appendix A. The Department will provide the application form to a license applicant upon completion of the pre-licensing technical assistance.

2. An initial licensing study checklist includes a list of those licensing rules that must be met before a license can be issued. A copy of the checklist is available from a representative of the Department or from the appropriate regional office in Appendix A.

(b) An applicant for a license shall submit an application at least 60 days before the date proposed for the center to begin operating.

(c) An applicant for an initial license shall include all the following with the application form:

1. The license fee required under s. 48.65 (3) (a), Stats.

2. A completed background information disclosure form provided by the department for the applicant. If the center is or will be located in a residence, a completed background information disclosure form shall be submitted for any household member aged 10 and above.

3. A statement from a representative of the department that details the results of any pre-licensing technical assistance.

4. A statement from the applicant that indicates the center is in compliance with all applicable items in this chapter.

5. A copy of all the policies required under s. DCF 251.04 (2) (h) and (i) and a completed copy of the group child care policy checklist provided by the department.

**Note:** Information on how to obtain a copy of the Group Child Care Policy Checklist is available on the department's website, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>, or from any regional licensing office in Appendix A.

5g. The articles of incorporation and by-laws if the licensee is organized as a corporation, association or cooperative. If the licensee is a limited liability company, articles of organization shall be submitted.

5r. A written delegation of administrative authority signed by the licensee. The delegation of administrative authority shall describe the organizational structure of the center and identify by position or name, those persons on the premises who are in charge of the center for all hours of operation.

6. Any other materials determined by the department as necessary to complete the department's licensing investigation.

(d) Upon submission of a complete application, the department shall conduct an investigation to determine whether the applicant is eligible for a license.

(e) If the department determines that the applicant is eligible for a license, the department shall issue a probationary license having a 6-month duration. A probationary license may be renewed for one 6-month period.

(f) If the department determines that an application does not comply with the applicable requirements of this chapter or the department's investigation determines that the applicant is not eligible for a license, the department may deny the application.

**(3) OBTAINING A REGULAR LICENSE.** (a) At least 30 days before the expiration date of a probationary license, an applicant for license renewal shall submit to the department the following materials:

1. A completed license application.

2. Any completed background information disclosure forms required under s. 48.685, Stats., including any applicable fees.

3. The license renewal fee under s. 48.65 (3) (a), Stats., and any forfeiture due and owing under s. 48.715 (3), Stats., or penalty under s. 48.76, Stats.

4. Any changes to center policies, if not previously submitted.

5. Any changes to the delegation of administrative authority if not previously submitted.

6. Any other materials determined by the department as necessary to complete the department's licensing investigation.

(b) If the department determines that the applicant has met the minimum requirements for a license under s. 48.67, Stats., and if the applicant has paid any applicable fees under ss. 48.65 and 48.685 (8), Stats., any forfeiture under s. 48.715 (3) (a), Stats., and any applicable penalty under s. 48.76, Stats., the department shall issue a regular license. Regular licenses shall be reviewed and continued for a 2-year period.

**(4) CONTINUING A REGULAR LICENSE.** (a) A regular license shall be valid indefinitely, unless suspended or revoked by the department or surrendered by the licensee.

(b) At least 30 days before the continuation review date of the license, an applicant for license renewal shall submit to the department the following materials:

1. A completed license continuation application.

2. Any completed background information disclosure forms required under s. 48.685, Stats., including any applicable fees.

3. The license renewal fee under s. 48.65 (3) (a), Stats., and any forfeiture due and owing under s. 48.715 (3), Stats., or penalty under s. 48.76, Stats.

4. Any changes to center policies, if not previously submitted.

5. Any changes to the delegation of administrative authority if not previously submitted.

6. Any other materials determined by the department as necessary to complete the department's licensing investigation.

**Note:** The department will supply a copy of the form, License Application — Group Child Care Centers, prior to the continuation date of the license.

(c) If the department determines that the licensee has met the minimum requirements for a license under s. 48.67, Stats., has paid the applicable fees referred to in ss. 48.65 and 48.685 (8), Stats., any forfeiture under s. 48.715 (3) (a), Stats., and any penalty under s. 48.76, Stats., the department shall continue the license for an additional 2 years.

**(5) AMENDING A LICENSE.** (a) A licensee shall submit to the department a written request for an amendment to the license if the licensee wishes to change any of the following aspects of the license:

1. A change in the licensed capacity of the center.

2. The age range of the children.

3. The hours of the center's operation.
4. The days of the week the center is in operation.
5. The months of the year the center is in operation.
6. The name of the center.

(b) A licensee may not make a change that affects a condition of the license under par. (a) without the prior written approval of the department.

(c) A licensee may not move the center to a new location or change ownership of the center without notifying the department at least 30 days prior to the change. A new application and license is required when a center moves or changes ownership.

**Note:** The department's form, License Application — Group Child Care Centers, is used to apply for a new license. The department will provide an application when notified by the licensee that the center will move to a new location.

(d) A licensee proposing to increase the licensed capacity of a center shall demonstrate compliance with this chapter in the operation of the existing center and compliance with rules for any other facility licensed by the department and operated by the licensee.

**(6) ADDITIONAL LICENSE.** A licensee applying for a license for an additional center location shall demonstrate compliance with this chapter in the operation of the existing center he or she operates and compliance with rules for any other facility licensed by the department and operated by the licensee. The licensee shall pay any fines, forfeitures or other fees due and owing under s. 48.715, Stats., or s. 48.65, Stats., on other facilities licensed by the department before the department issues an additional license.

**(7) LICENSE DENIAL OR REVOCATION.** (a) The department may deny, revoke or suspend a license, initiate other enforcement actions specified in this chapter or in ch. 48, Stats., or place conditions on a license if the applicant or licensee, a proposed or current employee, a volunteer or any other person having regular contact with the children, has or has been any of the following:

1. The subject of a pending criminal charge for an action that substantially relates to the care of children or activities of the center.

2. Convicted of a felony, misdemeanor or other offense or action that substantially relates to the care of children or activities of the center.

3. Determined to have abused or neglected a child pursuant to s. 48.981, Stats., or has been determined to have committed an offense which substantially relates to the care of children or the activities of the center.

4. The subject of a substantiated finding of misconduct in the department's nurse aide registry under s. DHS 129.10.

5. The subject of a court finding that the person has abandoned his or her child, has inflicted sexual or physical abuse on a child or has neglected or refused, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter for his or her child or ward or a child in his or her care so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

6. Had a child care license or certification revoked or denied within the last 5 years.

7. Violated any provision of this chapter or ch. 48, Stats., or fails to meet the minimum requirements of this chapter.

8. Made false statements or withheld information.

**Note:** Examples of charges and offenses the department will consider in making a determination under this paragraph that an act substantially relates to the care of children are: abuse or neglect of a child; sexual assault; abuse of a resident of a facility; a crime against life and bodily security; kidnapping; abduction; arson of a building or of property other than a building; robbery; receiving stolen property from a child; a crime against sexual morality, such as enticing a minor for immoral purposes or exposing a minor to harmful materials; and interfering with the custody of a child. The list is illustrative. Other types of offenses may be considered.

(b) The department may deny, revoke, refuse to renew or suspend a license, initiate other enforcement actions specified in this chapter or in ch. 48, Stats., or place conditions on the license if the applicant or licensee is not fit and qualified as determined under sub. (1).

**Note:** See DCF 251.03 (11g) for the definition of "fit and qualified." Examples of charges, actions or offenses the department will consider in making a determination under this paragraph that an act substantially relates to the care of children include the following: abuse or neglect of a child; sexual assault; abuse of a resident of a facility; a crime against life and bodily security; kidnapping; abduction; arson of a building or of property other than a building; robbery; receiving stolen property from a child; a crime against sexual morality, such as enticing a minor for immoral purposes or exposing a minor to harmful materials, interfering with the custody of a child. The list is illustrative. Other types of offenses may be considered.

(c) The department shall deny or refuse to continue or revoke a license if the applicant or licensee has failed to pay court-ordered payments of child or family support, maintenance, birth expenses, medical expenses or other expenses related to the support of a child or former spouse or for the failure of the applicant or licensee to comply, after appropriate notices, with a subpoena or warrant issued by the department or a county child support agency under s. 59.53 (5), Stats., and related to paternity or child support proceedings, as provided in a memorandum of understanding entered into under s. 49.857, Stats. Notwithstanding s. 48.72, Stats., an action taken under this subsection is subject to review only as provided in the memorandum of understanding entered into under s. 49.857, Stats., and not as provided in s. 48.72, Stats.

(d) The department shall deny an application for the issuance or continuation of a license or revoke a license if the department of revenue certifies under s. 73.0301, Stats., that the applicant or licensee is liable for delinquent taxes. An action taken under this subsection is subject to review only as provided under s. 73.0301 (5), Stats., and not as provided in s. 48.72, Stats.

**(8) EFFECT OF NOTICE TO DENY OR REVOKE A LICENSE.** (a) 1. If the department decides under sub. (7) to deny the grant of a license or to revoke a license, the department shall notify the applicant or licensee in writing of its decision and the reasons for that decision.

2. If the department revokes a license, the effective date of the revocation shall be either immediately or 30 days after the date of the notice, based on the criteria under s. 48.715 (4m) (a) and (b), Stats., unless the decision is appealed under sub. (10).

(b) Upon receipt of the notice in par. (a) and during any revocation or denial procedures that may result, a group child care center may not accept for care any child not enrolled as of the date of receipt of the notice without the written approval of the department.

**(9) SUMMARY SUSPENSION OF A LICENSE.** (a) Under the authority of s. 227.51 (3), Stats., the department shall summarily suspend a license and close a group child care center when the department finds that the public health, safety or welfare requires emergency action and incorporates a finding to that effect into its order. A finding of a requirement for summary suspension of the license may be based on any of the following:

1. Failure of the licensee to provide environmental protections for the children, such as heat, water, electricity or telephone service.

2. The licensee, an employee, a volunteer or any other person in regular contact with the children in care has been convicted of or has a pending charge for a crime against life or bodily security.

3. The licensee, an employee, a volunteer or any other person in regular contact with the children in care has been convicted of a felony, misdemeanor or other offense that substantially relates to the care of children or activities of the center or has a pending charge that substantially relates to the care of children or activities of the center.

4. The licensee, employee, volunteer or any other person in regular contact with the children in care is the subject of a current investigation for alleged child abuse or neglect pursuant to s. 48.981, Stats., or has been determined by a child protective services agency or law enforcement agency to have abused or neglected a child.

5. The licensee or a person under the supervision of the license has committed an action or has created a condition relating



to the operation or maintenance of the child care center that directly threatens the health, safety or welfare of any child under the care of the licensee.

(b) An order summarily suspending a license and closing a group child care center may be a verbal order by a licensing representative of the department. Within 72 hours after the order takes effect, the department shall either permit the reopening of the center or proceed under sub. (7) or (8) to revoke the license. A preliminary hearing shall be conducted by the department of administration's division of hearings and appeals, within 10 working days after the date of the initial order to close, on the issue of whether the license shall remain suspended during revocation proceedings.

**(10) APPEAL OF DECISION TO DENY OR REVOKE A LICENSE.** (a) Any person aggrieved by the department's decision to deny a probationary or regular license or to revoke a license may request a hearing on that decision under s. 227.42, Stats. The request for a hearing shall be in writing and submitted to the department of administration's division of hearings and appeals. The request for a hearing shall be sent to the division of hearings and appeals within 10 days after the date of the notice under sub. (8). A request for a hearing is considered filed upon its receipt by the division of hearings and appeals. A request for a hearing transmitted by facsimile to the division of hearings and appeals shall be considered filed on the date and time imprinted by the division's facsimile machine on the transaction report that accompanies the document. Documents received by facsimile after midnight local time shall be deemed filed on the first following business day.

**Note:** A request for hearing should be submitted by mail to the Division of Hearings and Appeals, P.O. Box 7875, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7875, or should be delivered to the Division at 5005 University Ave., Room 201, Madison, Wisconsin. Hearing requests may be faxed to 608-264-9885. A copy of the request should be sent to the appropriate Division of Children and Family Services regional office listed in Appendix A.

(b) The division of hearings and appeals shall conduct an administrative hearing under s. 227.42, Stats., within 30 calendar days after receipt of the request for the administrative hearing, unless any of the following occurs:

1. The aggrieved person consents to an extension of that time period.
2. The petitioner withdraws the request in writing.
3. The petitioner agrees in writing to accept an informal resolution of the appeal.
4. The petitioner abandons the hearing request. The division of hearings and appeals shall determine that abandonment has occurred when the petitioner, without good cause, fails to appear personally or by representative at the time and place set for the hearing or scheduled pre-hearing matters. Abandonment may also be deemed to have occurred when the petitioner or the authorized representative fails to respond within a reasonable time to correspondence from the division regarding the hearing or when

the petitioner is not at an agreed-upon telephone number at the agreed time.

(c) The division of hearings and appeals:

1. Shall consider and apply all standards and requirements of this chapter.
2. Issue a decision no later than 30 calendar days after holding the hearing, unless both parties agree to a later date.
3. May dismiss the petition if it determines that the petitioner has abandoned the request pursuant to par. (b) 4.

(d) If, under s. HA 3.09, the division of hearing and appeals issues a proposed decision, both parties may file comments on the decision with the division of hearings and appeals within 15 calendar days from the date of the proposed decision's issuance. At the close of the comment period, the division shall forward a decision and comments to the secretary for issuance of a final decision, and the secretary shall issue the final decision within 30 calendar days thereafter. The decision of the division of hearings and appeals administrative law judge, if adopted by the secretary, constitutes the final decision of the department.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; corrections in (3) (b) 1. b., 4. b., 7., (c) 1. and 2. and (7) (a) 4. made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 2001, No. 546; CR 03-052: renum. from HFS 46.12 and r. and recr. Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05; corrections in (2) (c) 5., (7) (a) 4. and (c) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 6. and 7., Stats., Register November 2008 No. 635; **CR 07-102: am. (1) (i), (2) (c) 2., (7) (a) 2., (9) (a) 5. and (10) (a), cr. (2) (c) 5g., 5r., (3) (a) 5., 6., (4) (b) 5. and 6. Register December 2008 No. 636, eff. 1-1-09.**

**DCF 251.12 Complaints, inspections and enforcement actions.** (1) **COMPLAINTS.** (a) Anyone having a complaint about a licensed or illegally operating group child care center may submit that complaint to the department by telephone, letter or personal interview. A representative of the department shall investigate every complaint. If requested by the complainant, the department shall provide the complainant a written report of the investigation findings.

**Note:** A complaint should be sent, phoned or delivered to the appropriate Division of Children and Family Services regional office listed in Appendix A.

(b) The licensee may not discharge an employee because that employee has reported violations of this chapter to the representative of the department.

(2) **INSPECTION.** Pursuant to s. 48.73, Stats., the department may visit and inspect any group child care center at any time during licensed hours of operation. A department licensing representative shall have unrestricted access to the premises identified in the license, including access to children served and staff records and any other materials or other individuals having information on the group child care center's compliance with this chapter.

(3) **ENFORCEMENT ACTION.** The department may order any sanction or impose any penalty on a licensee in accordance with s. 48.685, 48.715 or 48.76, Stats.

**History:** Cr. Register, January, 1997, No. 493, eff. 8-1-97; CR 03-052: renum. from HFS 46.13 and r. and recr. Register December 2004 No. 588, eff. 3-1-05.