



Michael R. Pence, Governor
State of Indiana

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration
402 W. WASHINGTON STREET, P.O. BOX 7083
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46207-7083

April 14, 2015

Dear CCDF Provider,

Thank you for caring for Hoosier children receiving Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) vouchers. All children need a safe and healthy environment. Children from low income families, including those receiving CCDF vouchers, have an even greater need for high quality child care that provides a safe environment where they can learn all that they need to be ready for success in school and in life. You play a critical role in the success of these children.

In December 2014, The Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL) sent out a letter to all CCDF providers informing you of the changes in the Indiana CCDF Provider Eligibility Standards laws (IC12-17.2-3.5) which will take effect July 1, 2015.

This mailing contains important information about the requirements on staff to child ratios and group sizes that will take effect on July 1, 2015. Please read this information carefully.

We recognize that there are many changes that your child care program must make in order to remain eligible to receive public funds through CCDF after July 1, 2015. These changes will significantly improve the health and safety of Hoosier children receiving a CCDF voucher. OECOSL will continue to send you additional information and resources on each change in the law in the coming months. You will also have the opportunity to attend future trainings, including webinars and teleconferences, on these new requirements.

Please visit <http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4935.btm> to see a copy of the new law, copies of past informational letters, and additional resources about the new requirements. You can also find free training opportunities by visiting IACCRR's Training Central at <http://www.iaccrr.org/default.cfm?page=training-central> or calling 1-800-299-1627.

Sincerely,

Melanie Brizzi
Director
Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning



Information and Resources on Ratio and Group Size Requirements

Effective July 1, the new Provider Eligibility Standards under IC12-17.2-3.5 require that all unlicensed providers that receive CCDF funds, including registered ministries that receive CCDF funds, follow staff to child ratios and group size requirements. The exact requirements depend on the total number of children (not just those receiving CCDF vouchers) that are enrolled in the program.

Staff to child ratio is the number of qualified adult caregivers that must be present for that number of children. For example, a ratio of 1:6 means that one qualified adult caregiver must be present for every six children.

Research has shown that one of the most important safety protections for children in early education and child care programs is the number of qualified adults present and caring for the children. Children have fewer accidents and injuries when there are a sufficient number of adults present. Additionally, having an adequate number of adults present allows for more positive adult and child interactions. Positive adult-child interactions are necessary for children to learn and develop and are therefore critical to school readiness.

Group size means the maximum number of children who routinely learn, eat, sleep, and play together inside and outside a facility where a provider operates a child care program. Children are each assigned to a specific group, often by age, with a primary adult caregiver. Children stay with their group throughout the day. This allows for caregivers to provide responsive and individualized attention to each child in their group and for the children to know and interact with one another. These types of interactions are critical to children's positive social and emotional development. Additionally, each caregiver knows which children are in his or her group and can make sure they are present and accounted for at all times. This keeps children safe from preventable harm and injury.

Providers will determine their ratio and group size numbers based on the total number of children enrolled in the program. It does not matter what type of building the program operates in.

If you enroll 16 or fewer children you will follow the same staff to child ratios and group size requirements as a licensed child care home under IC12-17.2-5. The requirements are listed on the attached chart labeled **Class I and Class II Child Care Homes and Unlicensed CCDF providers enrolling 16 or fewer children.**

If you enroll more than 16 children you will follow the same staff to child ratios and group size requirements for a licensed center under IC 12-17.2-4. Please see the attached chart labeled **Child to Staff Ratios for Licensed Centers and Unlicensed Providers CCDF Providers with more than 16 Children Enrolled.**

Additional information for Legally Licensed Exempt Homes:

Legally Licensed Exempt Homes are unlicensed providers caring for children in a residential building. These providers may care for no more than five (5) unrelated children. If a home provider cares for more than five (5) unrelated children, he or she must become licensed.

Legally licensed exempt home providers receiving CCDF must also meet staff to child ratios as defined for a licensed home under IC12-17.2-5. The provider's own children and relatives are counted in ratios if the children are under the age of seven (7) years old. Once a provider's child(ren) or relatives are seven (7) years and older they are no longer counted in ratios.

Please note that a relative is defined as a relationship to an individual who is less than eighteen (18) years of age by marriage, blood, or adoption, including parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, stepparents, step grandparents, stepsisters, stepbrothers, uncles, aunts, and first cousins.

Additional Information for Unlicensed CCDF Providers with more than sixteen (16) children enrolled:

Unlicensed CCDF providers, including registered ministries, with more than 16 children enrolled may utilize the following exception to staff to child ratios during nap/rest time for children toddler age and older only. This exception does not apply to infants.

During nap/rest time for children toddler age and older, caregivers may supervise children at fifty percent (50%) of the required child/staff ratio provided that:

- the required child/staff ratio is maintained on the premises;
- required caregivers are immediately accessible;
- a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the children in the class are asleep; and
- caregivers supervise sleeping children and never leave them unattended.

When setting up your facility to maintain ratio and group size you will need to do the following:

- Define the space to be used by each group of children. This is most often done by separating children by age. If you use mixed age groups, the ratios for the youngest child in the group must be maintained.
- Space can be defined by using individual rooms or can be accomplished by using walls, shelves and other classroom equipment to safely define individualized space, while keeping in mind the safe conditions for each child. Remember that infants and toddlers need to be protected from the active play of older children.
- Facility shall assign a caregiver to a group of children. That caregiver will be responsible for the daily care and activities for those children. Caregivers must be actively supervising children at all times by having all children in sight, alert to any problems that may occur; and taking an active supervisory role with the children. You may need to hire additional caregivers to ensure that ratios are maintained at all times.

If you have additional questions about implementing staff to child ratios and group sizes, please call the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning at 1-877-511-1144.

**Child to Staff Ratios
For Licensed Centers and Unlicensed CCDF Providers with more than
16 Children Enrolled**

Age of the Youngest Child in Group	Maximum Number of Children Supervised By One Caregiver	Maximum Number of Children in One Group
Infant (birth-11 months)	4	8
Toddler (12-23 months)	5	10
2 years (24-35 months)	5	10
30-36 months	7	14
3 years (35-47 months)	10	20
4 years (48-59 months)	12	24
5 years (60-71 months) or in Kindergarten	15	30
1st Grade and Above	20	40

If groups consist of children of mixed ages the child to staff ratios for the youngest child in the group must be maintained.

**Family and Social Services Administration
Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning
402 W Washington Street
Indianapolis IN 46204**

Child/Staff Ratios

Class I and II Child Care Homes
Mixed Age Groups

Children 16 Months and Over

	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
		2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1		2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*
2			2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*
3				2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*
4					2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	*
5						2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	*
6							2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	*
7								3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	*
8									3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	*
9										3	3	3	3	3	3	3	*
10											4	4	4	4	4	4	*
11												4	4	4	4	4	*
12													4	4	4	4	*
13														5	5	5	*
14															5	5	*
15																5	*
16																	*

The numbers in the grid are the number of adults required for the number of children. For example: If you have 3 infants under 16 months of age and 5 children 16 months of age and older, you would be required to have 1 caregiver.

*Exception to the chart-Infant/Toddler Mixed Age Group (Birth-24 months) 6:1
Two (2) of the six (6) children must be at least sixteen (16) months of age and walking. Otherwise the ratio for Infant/Toddler Mixed Age Group is 4:1.

The only time one (1) caregiver can care for twelve (12) children is when ALL children are three (3) years of age or older.