



Child care licensing changes

Issue:

- The Child Mortality Review Panel examines child deaths that occur in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The panel reviewed individual cases involving deaths that occurred while in the care of a licensed family child care provider and noted an increase in deaths in licensed family child care homes since 2006.
- A panel subcommittee convened in May 2012 to further study the deaths in licensed family child care homes and made recommendations in August 2012 for improvements in child safety to the DHS commissioner.

Proposal:

The governor recommends changes in child care licensing to prevent deaths in child care settings. The changes are aimed at strengthening child care licensing, improving safe sleep practices, increasing public awareness, improving and subsidizing training for providers, and improving the quality and consistency of licensing oversight. The recommendations include:

Licensing

- Restricting the use of loose bedding in cribs, requiring a physician's authorization to place an infant in any position other than on their back in a crib, enhanced infant supervision requirements in licensed family child care homes and clarifying requirements regarding holding sleeping infants.
- Imposing fines for licensed child care providers for violations of unsafe sleep practices for infants.
- Adding licensing correction orders issued by county social service agencies to licensed family child care providers to the DHS Licensing Information Lookup, an online database of the most frequently requested public information for licensed programs.
- Requiring all licensed family child care providers and child care centers to hold liability insurance as a requirement for licensure.

Training

- Requiring more frequent training for licensed family child care providers on health and safety practices, including safe infant sleep and crib safety.
- Subsidizing training costs for licensed family child care providers for both pre-service and in-service training requirements.
- Requiring family child care license applicants to complete all required training and pass a written competency exam prior to initial licensure.
- Adding new annual training for state and county licensors focusing on understanding and consistent monitoring and enforcement of licensing standards related to safe sleep and supervising for safety.

Impact:

- The recommendations are aimed at increasing child safety, particularly related to safe sleep practices. It is expected that implementing these changes will reduce child deaths in licensed family child care homes.
- More information on the DHS Licensing Information Lookup will ensure that parents have complete information on past licensing violations as they make decisions about care arrangements for their children.

Number of people affected:

- Families served by and child care providers working at 10,876 licensed family and group family child care homes
- Families served by and child care providers working at 1,590 licensed child care centers.

Fiscal impact:

Additional funding for more licensing regulation enforcement staff, increased state administrative costs for technology systems changes and licensor training and an increase in child care development grants to subsidize child care provider training costs:

- FY 2014: \$1.05 million
- FY 2015: \$1.30 million
- FY 2016: \$1.30 million
- FY 2017: \$1.30 million

Related information:

- Minnesota Management & Budget website: <http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/>
- Fact sheet: [Licensing human services providers protects health, safety, rights \(PDF\)](#)
- Fact sheet: [Child care licensing: Monitoring child care compliance with standards \(PDF\)](#)
- DHS website page on child care: http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/id_000151
- DHS website page on licensed child care programs: http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/id_054359
- DHS Licensing Information Lookup: <http://licensinglookup.dhs.state.mn.us/>

DHS Communications: March 2013