MiLEAP Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential | Child Care Licensing

2025 Child Care Home Licensing Rule Revisions

10/30/2025

Goals:

- Set a minimum standard for what child care programs must do to keep children safe, happy, healthy and learning.
- Help create a high-quality child care system that is accessible and affordable for all Michigan families.

This helps:

- Children have safe environments where they can learn and grow.
- Parents know what to expect when their child attends a licensed child care program.
- Early learning and care professionals know the health and safety expectations regardless of where they work.
- Early learning and care programs align their health and safety practices with widely accepted best practices to promote safe, healthy, engaging learning environments for children.

Rules must be:

- Clear
- Reasonable
- Necessary
- Aligned with state and federal law
- Consistent with national best practices

How this draft was created:

- Met with a total of 126 home based child care providers during 6 virtual meetings
- Met with representatives of community partners and state partners in virtual sessions
- Launched a survey of providers and received responses from 506 home-based providers
- Benchmarking Michigan's rules to national best practices
- Reviewing data about common rule violations and what support providers need
- Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee meetings and Ad Hoc Public Comment Opportunities

What's covered in the rules:

Part 1. Definitions, Licensing Process, Procedures, and Records

What: Defines key terms related to roles, health and safety standards, and facility requirements. Outlines the application process for providers, detailing steps to ensure compliance with regulatory standards.

Why: Providers and families deserve clarity and a shared understanding of licensed child care program regulations.

What to know about the proposed changes:

- Expanded Definitions: New definitions were introduced to clarify who is required to take health and safety training, who needs to complete a background check and who can be counted in child care staff member to child ratios.
  - Staff
  - Supervised Volunteer
  - Unsupervised Volunteer
- Revised requirement to more clearly defined licensing requirements for applicants and licensees.
- Eliminated TB Requirement for the licensee, household members, and staff.

Part 2. Space and Equipment

What: Minimum standards for indoor and outdoor spaces including topics such as equipment, bedding, heating, lighting, and maintenance.

Why: Children deserve safe and healthy environments to learn, play, sleep, eat, and use the restroom.

What to know about the proposed changes:

- Revised requirement to allow for the list of unsafe children's products to be accessed electronically.
- Revised requirement to clarify licensing requirements for smoking and vaping.

Part 3. Staffing

What: Minimum standards for staffing including who can work or volunteer in a child care home (background checks) and how many children can be served by a single adult (ratio).

Why: Children deserve to be safe in care. To ensure children's safety and well-being, staff must pass a background check, have knowledge of health and safety standards, and demonstrate (or are acquiring) knowledge of child development.

What to know about the proposed changes:

- Streamlined rules by removing significant overlap of rules and quality standards needed to create a safe environment for children to learn and grow.
- Revised Requirement: Within two years of the effective date of the rules, all staff must have a MiRegistry account and have professional development qualifications verified within the system to ensure critical health and safety training is complete.
- Training Update: Reorganized federally required orientation and professional development training in effort to make the rules clearer and more manageable for child care providers.
- Revised Requirement to clearly define licensing requirements for capacity.
- Decreased infant/toddler maximum to open more spaces for infant and toddler care.
- Adjusted ratio to allow for before and after school care for additional school-age children.

Part 4. General Health and Safety

What: Establishes comprehensive health and safety requirements for child care centers covering topics such as handwashing, diapering/toileting, biocontaminant precautions, medication administration, incident and illness reporting, water activities, and emergency preparedness plans.

Why: To promote and protect the health, safety, and security/well-being of children, staff, and volunteers.

What to know about the proposed changes:

- Health and Safety Requirements: Clarified federal health and safety requirements to assist with federal compliance.
- Mandatory food allergy plan: Created a requirement for homes to have a food allergy plan and detailed requirements for the plan to provide for children's welfare.

Part 5. Program and Care

What: Provides regulation for the care of children, emphasizing developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and positive discipline methods in licensed child care home settings.

Why: Parents should know the expectations for care standards that support their children's emotional and physical well-being.

What to know about the proposed changes:

- Nighttime Care: Clarifies that children can go back to sleep when they are dropped off during any nighttime care hours.
- Discipline Practices and Prohibited Punishment: Updates expectation for appropriate discipline.
- Clarifies prohibited means of punishment.

Part 6. Fire Safety

What: Standards for homes to comply with fire safety rules and regulations.

Why: Children deserve to be in safe buildings.

What to know about proposed rule changes:

- Enhanced Language: Provided clearer language in rules and definitions to assist in clarity and compliance for terms such as Fuel-Fire Equipment.

Part 7. Transportation

What: Safety standards for vehicles and transporting children.

Why: Parents deserve to know that their children will be transported in a safe manner.

What to know about the proposed rule changes:

- Defines training and background check requirements for drivers.
- Clarifies precautions necessary for when children are entering or leaving the vehicle.