

PREFACE

**DCF 251
LICENSING RULES FOR GROUP CHILD CARE CENTERS
Effective January 1, 2009**

Section 48.65, Wisconsin Statutes, requires that persons operating child care centers, that provide care and supervision for 4 or more children under 7 years of age for less than 24 hours a day, be licensed. The statute also requires the Department of Children and Families to establish rules which must be met in order to qualify for a license and which protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the children in a child care center.

Chapter DCF 251 is the administrative code governing Group Child Care Centers that provide care and supervision for 9 or more children for less than 24 hours a day.

The purpose of the DCF 251 Group Child Care Rule with Commentary is to help users of DCF 251 understand the intent and application of the rule. An attempt has been made to offer commentary for those rules where experience indicates clarification would be helpful. However, a commentary cannot be written to cover every situation encountered.

The portion of this publication that is numbered and in regular print is the administrative code DCF 251. The portion of the publication that is within boxes and in *italicized print* is commentary that was prepared by staff of the Bureau of Early Care Regulation.

There is a header on each page that contains the rule cite for the portion of the rule beginning on that page. A table of contents and an index are also included as are appendices that contain key statutes related to child care rules, a copy of DHS 12 (administrative rules governing caregiver background checks) and other appendices referenced in the rule.

The DCF 251 Group Child Care Rule with Commentary was prepared primarily as a tool for licensing specialists. However, it may also be a useful resource for family child care providers. Providers who require additional information should contact their regional licensing specialist.

This publication may be duplicated. It is also available from the Department's website:
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/licensed/rules.htm>.

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