

## Required Items for Group Child Care Centers

### A. Items to be Kept in Children's Files

1. Completed *Child Care Enrollment* form or the licensee's own form that includes all of the following shall be on file prior to the child's first day of attendance: [251.04(6)(a)1.]
  - 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.
2. Completed *Child Care Enrollment* form or the licensee's own form documenting consent from the parent for emergency medical care or treatment shall be on file prior to the child's first day of attendance. [251.04(6)(a)2.]
3. Authorization from the parent for the child to participate in field trips and other off-premises activities, if these are part of the center's program.

**Note:** The center may use the department's *Field Trip or Other Activity Notification / Permission* or *Child Care Enrollment* form or the licensee's own form to obtain authorization. [251.04(6)(a)4.]
4. 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 center may use either the department's *Alternate Arrival / Release Agreement – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee's own form. [251.04(6)(a)5.]
5. Completed *Health History and Emergency Care Plan – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee's own form documenting the child's health history. [251.04(6)(a)6.]
6. Documentation that indicates the child's immunization history is in compliance with s. 252.04, Stats., and ch. DHS 144.

**Note:** The Department of Health Services' form *Child Care Immunization Record* or an electronic printout from the Wisconsin Immunization Registry or other registry maintained by a health care provider may be used for this requirement. Under s. 252.04, Wis. Stats., and ch. DHS 144, the immunization record must be on file no later than 30 school days (6 calendar weeks) after the first day of a child's attendance. [251.04(6)6m.]
7. Specific informed written consent from the parent for each incident of participation by a child in any research or testing project. The center may use the department's *Informed Consent for Observation or Testing by an Outside Agency – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee's own form. [251.04(6)(a)7.]
8. Documentation of the results of the most recent physical exam (required every 6 months for children under 2 years of age and every 2 years for children at least 2 years of age but under 5 years; children 5 years of age and above are not required to have a health exam). [251.04(6)(a)8.]

**Note:** The *Child Health Report – Child Care Centers* form, signed and dated by an approved health care provider, or an electronic printout from a child's licensed physician, physician assistant, or EPSDT provider may be used for this requirement.
9. Written authorization from child's physician if the parent requests the child be provided with a special diet based on a medical condition, excluding food allergies but including nutrient concentrates and supplements. [251.07(5)(a)9.]
10. Written request from the parent if the child must be provided with a special diet based on a food allergy. [251.07(5)(a)9m.]
11. Written parental consent for the center to care for the child when mildly ill if the center will be licensed to care for mildly ill children. [251.07(6)(d)3.]
12. Completed *Authorization to Administer Medication – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee's own form 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, to obtain written authorization if the center will give prescription or non-prescription medication to children. Blanket authorizations that exceed the length of time specified on the label are prohibited. [251.07(6)(f)1.a.]

13. Written authorization from the parent to apply sunscreen or insect repellent. Authorization shall include the brand and ingredient strength and shall be reviewed and updated every 6 months. [251.07(6)(g)3.]
14. Written acknowledgement from the parents confirming they are aware of the presence of pets and animals if pets and animals are allowed to roam in areas of the center occupied by children. [251.07(7)(c)]
15. If transportation is provided, completed *Transportation Permission – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee’s own form obtaining authorization from the parent to transport the child to and from the center. [251.08(2)]
16. For infants and toddlers, completed form, *Intake for Child Under 2 Years – Child Care Centers*, or the licensee’s own form that includes all of the following shall be on file prior to admission. [251.09(1)(am)]
  - a. Schedule of meals and feeding.
  - b. Types of food introduced and timetable for new foods.
  - c. Toileting and diapering procedures.
  - d. Sleep and nap schedule.
  - e. The child’s way of communicating and being comforted.
  - f. Developmental and health history.
17. Changes in an infant’s or toddler’s development and routines shall be documented every 3 months based on discussion between the child care worker(s) and the parent(s). [251.09(1)(c)]
18. Written authorization from child’s physician if a child under 1 year of age is to be put to sleep in a position other than on his or her back in a crib. [251.09(2)(bm)]
19. Written authorization from the child’s physician if an infant/toddler must be provided with a type of milk or milk substitute other than formula or breast milk. [251.09(3)(a)3.; 251.07(5)(a)9.]
20. Specific written directions from the parent or the child’s physician if lotions, powders, or salves are to be applied during diapering. [251.09(4)(a)10.]

**Notes:**

- Required records must be maintained for the length of time the child is enrolled, be on the premises for children in care, and be available to the licensing specialist for review. It is recommended that the date of discharge be added to the child’s record and that the center retain records for 3 years after a child is discharged. [251.04(6)(a); 251.04(7)(c)]

**B. Items to be Kept in Staff Files**

1. Completed *Staff Record – Child Care Centers* form or the licensee’s own form that includes all of the following shall be obtained prior to the employee’s first day of work and kept current thereafter. [251.05(2)(a)1.]
  - a. Employee name, address, and date of birth.
  - b. Educational qualifications.
  - c. Position title.
  - d. Previous work experience in child care including reason for leaving previous positions.
  - e. The name, address, and telephone numbers of persons to be notified in an emergency.
2. Documentation of a completed child care background check that indicates the person is eligible to work in a child care program as specified in s. 48.686, Stats., and ch. DCF 13. [251.05(2)(a)2.]
 

**Note:** The Preliminary Eligibility Determination and/or the Final Eligibility Determination notices are the documentation accepted as the results of a complete child care background check after 9/30/2018.
3. A physical examination report that was completed not more than 12 months prior to nor more than 30 days after the person became was hired. The report shall be signed and dated by a licensed physician, physician’s assistant, or other EPSDT provider and shall indicate that the person is free from illness detrimental to children, including tuberculosis, and that the person is physically able to work with young children. [251.05(2)(a)3.]
 

**Note:** The physical examination report may be a printout of an electronic record from a medical professional or on the *Staff Health Report – Child Care Centers* form.
4. For each teacher, director, and administrator who has been in the position for 6 months, a certificate from the Wisconsin Registry (the Wisconsin early childhood professional recognition system) documenting that the person has met the educational qualifications for the position. For school-age only programs, the administrator, center director and teachers shall obtain a certificate within 6 months after assuming the position. Persons holding an educator’s license issued by the department of public instruction are not required to obtain a certificate. [251.05(2)(a)4.a. and b.]
5. Documentation of all required entry-level training / experience shall be on file prior to the employee’s first day of work. [251.05(2)(a)4.d.]
6. Documentation of a high school diploma or its equivalent for those positions that require a high school diploma. [251.05(2)(a)5.]

7. Documentation of the days and hours worked, and in which classroom, when the person was included in the staff-to-child ratio. [251.05(2)(a)6.]
8. Documentation of compliance with continuing education requirements under sub. (4)(c). [251.05(2)(a)7.]
9. Documentation of training on abusive head trauma prevention prior to beginning to work with children under 5 years of age. [251.05(3)(b)]
10. A current certificate of completion for infant and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator use from an agency approved by the department obtained within 3 months after beginning to work with children in care. [251.05(3)(c)]
11. Documentation that the center director has obtained any additional training required under Table 251.05A or Table 251.05B.
12. Completed *Staff Orientation Checklist – Group Child Care Centers* or the licensee’s own form documenting that the employee received an orientation within the first week at the center, and that the orientation included all of the following: [251.05(4)(a); 251.05(2)(a)]
  - a. A review of chapter DCF 251.
  - b. A review of center policies required under s. DCF 251.04(2)(h).
  - c. A review of the center emergency plans required under s. DCF 251.04(2)(h)9., including fire and tornado evacuation plans and the operation of fire extinguishers.
  - d. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions.
  - e. First aid procedures.
  - f. Administration of medications.
  - g. Job responsibilities in relation to the job description.
  - h. Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control, including handwashing procedures, universal precautions for handling body fluids, and immunizations.
  - i. A schedule of activities of the center.
  - j. 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.
  - k. Child management techniques.
  - l. The 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.
  - m. If the center is licensed to care for children under one year of age, a review of procedures to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome prior to an employee’s or volunteer’s first day of work.
  - n. The procedure to contact a parent if a child is absent from the center without prior notification from the parent.
  - o. Information on any special needs a child enrolled in the center may have and the plan for how those needs will be met.
  - p. Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic.
  - q. The handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants.
  - r. If your center operates during any period of time between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., training in techniques of evacuating sleeping children in an emergency. [251.10(4)(a)]
13. For meal preparation personnel, documentation of annual training of at least 4 hours in kitchen sanitation, food handling, and nutrition. [251.06(9)(g)1.d.]

**C. Items to be Provided to Parents**

1. A summary of Chapter DCF 251 Group Child Care Centers shall be provided to parents of each child upon enrollment.  
**Note:** Paper copies of the brochure “*Your Guide to Regulated Child Care – Your Summary of the Child Care Rules*” may be obtained from the Child Care Information Center by calling 1-800-362-7353, and the PDF print-on-demand version is available from the department’s website at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>. [251.04(4)(e)]
2. When food for a child is provided by the parent, provide parents with information about requirements for food groups and quantities specified by the U.S. department of agriculture child and adult care food program minimum meal requirements. [251.07(5)(a)8.]

**D. Items Required to be Posted in an Area of the Center Accessible to Parents**

1. The group child care license. [251.04(2)(k)]
2. The current licensing statement of compliance or noncompliance statement and correction plan, including any rule violations the department has not verified as corrected and in compliance. [251.04(2)(L)1.a.]

3. Any notice from the department regarding rule violations, such as a warning letter or enforcement action. [251.04(2)(L)1.b.]
4. Any stipulations, conditions, temporary closures, exceptions, or exemptions that affect the license. [251.04(2)(L)1.c.]
5. A copy of Chapter DCF 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers. [251.04(4)(f)]
6. A copy of the center's child care policies and procedures. [251.04(4)(g)]
7. A copy of the menus for meals and snacks provided by the center (including any changes to the planned menu). [251.07(5)(a)5; 251.07(5)(a)6.]
8. When snacks are provided by parents for all children, a record of the snack served. [251.07(5)(a)6m.]

#### E. Notifications to Parents

1. Illness / Injury:
  - a. The child has been exposed to a confirmed case of a communicable disease reportable under ch. DHS 145 and transmitted through normal contact. [251.04(4)(a)1.]
  - b. Notification shall be made immediately and shall provide sufficient detail to reasonably appraise the parent when:
    - The child becomes ill. [251.04(4)(a)2.a.]
    - The child needs professional evaluation of an injury. [251.04(4)(a)2.b.]
    - The child experiences a head injury, has a seizure, consumes incorrect breastmilk, consumes food or drink that may contain the child's allergen, consumes or comes in contact with poisonous materials, or is given incorrect medication. Note: A "head injury" means a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. [251.04(4)(a)2.c.]
    - The child's whereabouts are unknown to the assigned provider. [251.04(4)(a)2.d.]
    - The child was subject to child guidance that is prohibited under s. DCF 251.07(2)(e) and (f). [251.04(4)(a)2.e.]
  - c. The child sustained a minor injury that does not appear to require professional medical evaluation. The parents may be notified when they pick up the child or when the child is delivered. [251.04(4)(a)3.]
2. Parent communication.
  - a. The child will be going on a field trip that is not part of the regularly scheduled program. Notification of the date, time, and destination shall be prior to the field trip. [251.04(4)(a)4.]
  - b. The center shall offer conferences 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. [251.04(4)(c)]
  - c. Child care workers shall document changes in an infant / toddler's development and routines every 3 months based on discussion with the parent. [251.09(1)(c)]
  - d. The plan for transitioning a child from the infant / toddler group into a new age group needs to be discussed with parents prior to the transition. [251.09(1)(d)]
3. If a child is absent from the center without prior notification from the parent, the parents shall be notified in accordance with center policy. [251.055(1)(h)]
4. If pets are added after a child is enrolled, parents shall be notified in writing prior to the pets' addition to the center. [251.07(7)(c)]

#### F. Other Required Items

1. Current, accurate, written attendance records that include time of arrival, time of departure for each child for the duration of time the child is enrolled in the program.
 

**Note:** The form, *Daily Attendance Record – Child Care Centers*, can be used to meet this requirement. [251.04(6)(b)]
2. If children are transported by the center to or from the child's home or school, daily attendance records that includes the actual time the child was picked up or dropped off. [251.04(6)(c)]
3. Documentation that staff meetings have been held at least 9 times in a calendar year or one time for each month of center operation. [251.05(4)(b)]
4. Emergency numbers including local fire department, police department or other law enforcement agency, poison control center, and emergency medical service in a location known to all providers. [251.06(2)(f)]
5. Post the fire evacuation route and tornado shelter areas. [251.06(3)(b)1.]
6. Completed *Fire Safety and Emergency Response Documentation – Group Child Care Centers* form or the licensee's own form for documenting:
  - a. A written record of dates and times of all fire and tornado drills practiced. [251.06(3)(b)4.]
  - b. Annual fire extinguisher inspection. [251.06(4)(a)]
  - c. Monthly fire detection and prevention systems and signaling device. [251.06(4)(j)]

7. Medical log book for recording an evidence of unusual bruises, contusions, lacerations, or burns seen on the child, regardless of whether received while in the care of the center, any injuries received by a child while in the care of the center on the date the injury occurred, any medication dispensed to a child, on the date the medication is dispensed, and any incident or accident that occurs when the child is in the care of the center that results in professional medical evaluation. The log shall be in a book with stitched binding and lined and numbered pages. 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. There shall be documentation in the medical log that reviews have taken place every 6 months, and the logs should be kept as long as the center is in operation. [251.07(6)(dm)]
8. Procedures for heating infant formula, milk and food shall be posted. [251.09(3)(b)]
9. If a child's parent or physician has submitted specific written direction to apply lotions, powders, or salves to a child during diapering, the directions on use shall be posted in the diaper changing area. [251.09(4)(a)10.]

**G. Reporting to the Department** All information provided to the department shall be current and accurate. [251.04(2)(c)]

1. DCF 251.04(3) requires that certain circumstances be reported to the department. Initial reports for these items can be made by telephone, but a written report is required within 5 business days of the incident. Written reports can be made by fax, email, or letter.
  - a. Any incident or accident that occurs while the child is in the care of the center that results in professional medical evaluation within 24 hours of the licensee becoming aware of the medical evaluation. [251.04(3)(a)]
  - b. Any death of a child in care, within 24 hours after the death. [251.04(3)(am)]
  - c. Any injury caused by an animal to a child in care, within 24 hours after the incident. [251.04(3)(ar)]
  - d. Any damage to the premises which may affect compliance with Chapter DCF 251, or any incident at the premises that results in loss of utility services, within 24 hours after the occurrence. [251.04(3)(b)]
  - e. A change in the administrator or center director of a child care center within 30 days after the change. [251.04(3)(c)]
  - f. A change of any program service, including expected temporary closures lasting more than 2 weeks, at least 5 days prior to the change. [251.04(3)(d)]
  - g. Unexpected closures lasting more than 2 weeks, within 24 hours after the center has been closed for a 2-week period. [251.04(3)(dm)]
  - h. Statistical data required by the department on forms provided by the department. [251.04(3)(e)]
  - i. If requested by the department, a plan of correction for cited violations of DCF 251 or ch. 48, Stats., in a format specified by the department. [251.04(3)(f)]
  - j. Any known convictions, pending charges, or other offenses of the licensee, group child care center employees, or other person subject to a child care background check that could potentially relate to the care of children at the center or activities of the center by the department's next business day. See DCF 13.08 Reporting requirements. [251.04(3)(g)]
  - k. 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. [251.04(3)(h)]
  - l. 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. [251.04 (3)(i)]
  - m. Any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by an employee or volunteer that was reported under s. DCF 251.04(8), 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. [251.04(3)(j)]
  - n. Any prohibited actions specified in s. DCF 251.07 (2) (e) by an employee or volunteer to a child in care, within 24 hours after the incident. [251.04(3)(jm)]
2. The licensee shall report as soon as possible, but no later than the department's next business day, when a person aged 10 and older begins residing at, or is expected to reside at, the center. Notification must include a completed *Background Check Request* (BCR) form. [251.04 (2) (n); 13.07(2)(a)1.; 13.07(2)(b)]
3. The licensee shall report as soon as possible, but no later than the department's next business day, when a current household member turns 10 years of age. Notification must include a completed *Background Check Request* (BCR) form. [251.04(2)(o); 13.08(2)(a)2.; 13.07(2)(b)]
4. The licensee shall report as soon as possible, but no later than the department's next business day, when a current household member turns 18 years of age. Notification must include a completed *Background Check Request* (BCR) form. [13.07(2)(a)3.; 13.07(2)(b)]
5. The licensee shall report as soon as possible, but no later than the department's next business day, when a corporation or limited liability company designates a new person to be subject to the background check. Notification must include a completed *Background Check Request* (BCR) form. [251.04(2)(n); 13.07(2)(a)4.; 13.07(2)(b)]

6. The licensee shall report as soon as possible, but no later than the department's next business day, when a caregiver, noncaregiver employee, or household member changes his or her name. [13.07(2)(a)5.]
7. A center with an approved plan for use of off-premises outdoor play space shall immediately report to the department any significant change in any circumstance described in the plan. [251.06(11)(c)8.]
8. 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 are required when a center moves or changes ownership. [251.11(5)(c)]

The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please contact the Bureau of Early Care Regulation at [dcfclicreg@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dcfclicreg@wisconsin.gov) or (608) 421-7550. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled can use the free Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711 to contact the department.