



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Consumer Statement – updated May 2024

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (RI DHS) is responsible for the administration of the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG). This consumer statement provides an overview of the policies and practices related to two specific aspects of this grant. The first is the licensing and monitoring of child care programs within Rhode Island. The second is the implementation and support of the Rhode Island's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). The goal of this document is to educate and support families in Rhode Island in their ability to find safe, quality child care.

DHS Child Care Licensing Unit (CCLU)

The Child Care Licensing Unit (CCLU) ensures that children attending childcare programs in Rhode Island are in a safe and healthy environment and are provided with care, supervision and developmentally appropriate activities that meet each child's physical and emotional needs. The licensing office licenses child care centers, family child care homes and group family child care homes.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the different types of childcare programs.

Monitoring of Child Care Providers

All programs licensed by CCLU are required to meet specific health and safety training requirements.

[Click here](#) to view the regulations related to each provider type.

In addition to licensing providers, the CCLU is also responsible for the annual monitoring visit of each licensed provider to ensure compliance with these regulations. During this visit, a monitoring report (inspection report) is completed by the licensor completing the visit. These reports are posted for the public to view at <https://earlylearningprograms.dhs.ri.gov/>. These reports outline the health and safety regulations that were assessed as well as any corrective action the provider must take to rectify any noncompliance.

[Click here](#) For more information on the monitoring process.

Criminal Background Checks

All persons 18 and over who have regular direct access to children receiving care or providing services directly to a child or children in specific categories such as licensed child care applicants, employees, volunteers, etc. are required to have a comprehensive background check background check.

[Click here](#) to view an infographic that explains the comprehensive background check

Quality Rating

Rhode Island implements a tiered quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) called BrightStars through a contract with the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC). QRIS is a method used in almost all states in the U.S. to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care, education, and school-age settings.

Through a star rating system, BrightStars recognizes program quality and gives parents information to make choice about their children's care and education. All CCAP providers are required to be BrightStars rated.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Rhode Island's quality rating system.

Childcare Resource and Referral Services

BrightStars also serves as Rhode Island's Resource and Referral Agency. They assist families in identifying childcare options in their area, including family childcare homes, childcare centers, school age programs and summer camps. Families can call (401) 739-6100 or 1-855-398-7605 to speak with a childcare referral specialist.

[Click here](#) for more information about this service.

How to Report a Concern About a Child Care Provider

Complaints regarding licensed child care providers are handled either by the CCLU or by Child Protective Services (CPS) at the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF.) Regardless of where the complaint begins, the Child Care Licensing Unit maintains information regarding all complaints received, investigative action taken and resolutions.

All persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL 40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect (1-800-RI-CHILD.) If an individual has a concern that is regulatory in nature that does not rise to the level of a potential child abuse or neglect, that person should call the DHS Licensing Unit at 401-462-3009 or email the Unit at

DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov.

Rhode Island's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

CCAP provides financial support for all eligible families with young children. By removing the expense of childcare as a barrier to employment, we hope to promote self-sufficiency for all Rhode Island citizens.

The Child Care Assistance Program can subsidize the cost of child care for families that reside in Rhode Island, are US citizens or legal residents and with children under the age of 13. The age can be extended to 18 if the child has special needs.

Child Care Assistance is available to:

- Low-income families who meet guidelines and are working a minimum of 20 hours per week and above RI minimum wage.
- Families participating in training, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work experience, work immersion sponsored by the Governor's Workforce Board, who need child care in order to take part in these job readiness/training opportunities.
- Families participating in the RI Works program.
- Pregnant/Parenting Teens participating in DHS' Youth Success program

Also available to families is Transitional Child Care which allows families already participating in the CCAP program to remain eligible for the subsidy program if their income ~~is less~~ and does not exceed 300% of the federal poverty level (as of July 1, 2022)

If you have questions regarding accessing/applying for CCAP, you can contact the Department of Human Services at 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) or visit, <https://healthyrhode.ri.gov/HIXWeb13/DisplayRIServices>.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy for Children Served in CCAP-Approved Early Learning Programs:

Suspension and expulsion are practices which are not supported in CCAP programs unless all other options have been exhausted. Suspension and expulsion are generally not considered to be in the best interest of children and families. In general, when CCAP providers have a child they are concerned about, they must first work with the child's teacher and community supports, such as SUCCESS, in order to formulate a plan for supporting the child in the classroom. During this

time the program should maintain communication with the RI DHS CCAP Office. Providers are encouraged to articulate suspension and expulsion policies in their Family Handbooks.

Additional Services for Children and Families

The Rhode Island Department of Health and Human Services assists individuals and families with locating and receiving various resources and services including temporary shelter, financial assistance, nutrition, medical, and community services.

[Click here](#) to learn more about any of these services.

RI DHS also partnered with the Rhode Island Children's Cabinet to develop a website where all families with young children can find information about childcare, developmental screenings, family home visiting and other health and developmental programs based on the age of your child. Please visit <http://kids.ri.gov/>. to see what programs may be best for you and your family.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the information found on this website, please call 401-462-3009 or email DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov and someone will be happy to assist you.

