



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Office of Child Care - Consumer Statement

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 regarding 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 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, affordable, and 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 unit licenses child care centers, family child care homes and group family child care homes.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the different types of child care 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 licenser 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](#) to view monitoring reports.

Criminal Background Checks

All persons age 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.

[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 United States 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 a 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.

Child Care Resource and Referral Services

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

[Click here](#) for more information about this child care resource and referral 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 RI Department of Children, Youth, & Families (DCYF). Regardless of where the complaint begins, the Child Care Licensing Unit maintains information regarding all complaints received, investigative actions 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 DCYF 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 and does not rise to the level of a potential child abuse or neglect, that person should call the licensing unit at 401-462-3009 or email DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov.

Rhode Island's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

CCAP provides subsidies to offset the cost of child care for eligible families with young children. Families choose a CCAP approved provider that best meets their individual needs and the subsidy is paid directly to the provider on behalf of the family. By reducing or removing the expense of child care as a barrier to employment, training, or education, the program supports Rhode Island families on a path to independence and economic success.

CCAP is available to families who meet the eligibility criteria including:

- Income eligible families working a minimum of 20 hours per week earning at least RI minimum wage;
- Families participating in training, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work experience, work immersion sponsored by the Governor's Workforce Board;
- Families enrolled in a degree program at the Community College of RI (CCRI), Rhode Island College (RIC), or University of Rhode Island (URI);
- Families participating in the RI Works program;
- Pregnant or parenting teens participating in RI DHS's Teen and Family Development program;
- Families must reside in Rhode Island, applicant children must be US citizens or qualified immigrants and be under age 13 (or under age 19 if the child has special needs).
- Additional eligibility criteria may apply.

[Click here](#) for more information about application and eligibility.

Transitional Child Care allows families already participating in the CCAP program to remain eligible for the subsidy program if their income increases above the income threshold but does not exceed 300% of the federal poverty level.

If you have questions regarding accessing or applying for CCAP, contact the Department of Human Services at 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) or visit HealthSourceRI here: [HealthSource RI | Create Account Steps](#)

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 are concerned about a child, they must first work with the child's teacher and community supports, such as SUCCESS (for information about SUCCESS programming and contacts visit: [Quality Initiatives | RI Department of Human Services](#)) to formulate a plan for supporting the child in the classroom. During this time, the program should maintain communication with the DHS CCAP Office. Providers are encouraged to articulate suspension and expulsion policies in their family handbooks.

Additional Information and Services for Children and Families

RI DHS 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 these services.

RI DHS partnered with the Rhode Island Children's Cabinet to develop a website where families with young children can find information about child care, developmental screenings, family home visiting and other health and developmental programs based on the age of your child.

[Click here](#) to see available resources.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the information found on this consumer statement, please reach out to the Office of Child Care Licensing Unit at 401-462-3009 or email DHS.Childcarelicensing@dhs.ri.gov. A team member will reach out and be happy to assist you.