



BACKGROUND

In the 1970s, California led the nation in creating a licensing system for community care facilities, and pioneered recognition of the special needs of infants and toddlers with a license distinct from that of preschool-age care. While the standard of care in California statute remains appropriate, the bifurcation of early care licensing in California into two separate licenses is unnecessary and problematic. California is one of only two states in the country which employ a separate infant-toddler license, and family child care providers are not subject to the dual-license requirement. Only private fee, state, and federally funded center-based programs must have multiple licenses. Other states employ a single license for early childhood centers, mandating developmentally appropriate standards based on the age of the children served.

PROBLEM WITH THE DUAL LICENSE SYSTEM

The intent of the current statute is to maintain appropriate caregiver qualifications and staffing ratios, but having multiple licenses is unduly burdensome on childcare operators and result in duplicative for Community Care Licensing (CCL) analysts who inspect facilities. If a facility has two licenses, operators must apply separately for each license and CCL must inspect the facility for each license, possibly requiring two separate visits. The dual-license system contributes to the shortage of child care in California. Since infant care is more costly to provide, child care operators frequently opt not to apply for the infant license to avoid the administrative burden, leaving a significant deficit in the supply of licensed infant care.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Community Care Licensing (CCL) provides and administers licenses for Infants (Birth-2yrs) and Preschoolers (2yrs-entering first grade). The "Toddler Component" refers to the component of

an infant or preschool care program license designed for children between the ages of 18 months and 36 months. While programs may apply for a waiver to allow a child to stay in the toddler classroom until 36 months, this is a time consuming process and ultimately is up to the discretion and time available to process the multiple requests of local CCL analysts.

PROPOSAL

- Create a single integrated license for child care centers.
- Maintain existing quality standards – caregiver training, child/adult ratios based on age, etc.
- Reduce vacancies, enabling the current system to serve more children.
- Be fiscally neutral – programs would continue to pay licensing fees equal to the current system.
- Reduce paperwork for child development facilities and for California Community Care Licensing.

SUPPORT

Los Angeles County Office of Education, Santa Clara County Office of Education, California Head Start Association, Association of California School Administrators, Children Now, Pacific Clinics, Advancement Project, San Mateo County Child Care Partnership Council, Little Mud Puddles Learning Center, Peninsula Family Services, Child Care Resource Center, First 5 Santa Clara County, Kidango, The Institute for Human and Social Development, California Assoc. for the Education of Young Children, Professional Association for Childhood Education, Easter Seals, CA Child Development Admin Assoc.

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