



Division of Early Care and Education

YOUR GUIDE TO REGULATED CHILD CARE
Your summary of the child care rules

TYPES OF REGULATED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Licensed Family Child Care Centers

A program regulated under DCF 250 where a person provides care and supervision for less than 24 hours per day for at least 4 and not more than 8 children who are not related to the provider.

Age groups may be mixed according to the following combinations. Additional allowed school-aged children in care for 3 or fewer hours per day are shown in parentheses.

Table with 6 columns: Children Under Age 2, Children Age 2 and Older, School Age Children, Maximum Group Size. Rows show combinations of age groups and their corresponding maximum group sizes.

Licensed Group Child Care Centers

A program regulated under DCF 251 where a person for less than 24 hours per day provides care and supervision for 9 or more children who are not related to the provider.

Table with 3 columns: Age of Children, Staff-To-Child Ratio\*, Maximum Group Size. Rows list age ranges from Birth to 2 yrs to 6 yrs and over with corresponding ratios and group sizes.

\* These ratios are adjusted for mixed age groups

Licensed Day Camps for Children

A program regulated under DCF 252 that provides care and supervision to 4 or more children, 3 years of age and older, in a seasonal program oriented to the out-of-doors for periods less than 24 hours per day.

Certified Family Child Care

A program regulated under DCF 202 where a person provides care and supervision for less than 24 hours per day for no more than 3 children under age 7 with a maximum group size of 6, including the provider's own children under age 7.

Certified School-Age Programs

A group child care center certified under DCF 202 to provide care and supervision to school-aged children aged 7 and older.

A WORD ON WISCONSIN CHILD CARE REGULATIONS

Anyone providing care and supervision for 4 or more children under age 7 years for less than 24 hours a day must be licensed by the Department. Exceptions to this rule are:

- List of exceptions to the licensing rule, including: A parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, stepparent, brother, sister, first cousin, nephew, niece, uncle, or aunt of a child; Public and parochial schools; Care provided in the home of the child's parent; Counties, cities, towns, school districts and libraries; A program that operates not more than 4 hours per week; Group lessons to develop a talent or skill; A program where the parents are on the premises; Seasonal programs of ten days or less duration; Emergency situations; Care and supervision for no more than 3 hours a day while the parent is employed; A program provided where the child of a recipient of temporary assistance to needy families, or Wisconsin works, is involved in orientation, enrollment or initial assessment or where parents are provided training or counseling.

Regulations set standards for adequate child care, but they cannot guarantee quality care. That is why parent involvement is so crucial.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

First, talk to your child's caregiver and try to work out your differences. If those attempts fail, and you feel the caregiver is violating a state licensing regulation, contact the appropriate regional office. See http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/licensed/contact.htm or call 1-800-362-7353 for contact information. If you feel the caregiver is violating certification rules, contact the appropriate certifying agency. See http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/certification/pdf/certifiers.pdf for the certifying agency in your county or call 608-267-2079 for contact information.