



Department of early education and care (DEEC)

Parent information, rights and responsibilities

Chapter 28, section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of day care centers and nursery schools.

The licensee (day care center owner) is required to inform all parents of specific information about their rights and responsibilities at the time of admission of their child to the center. Section 7.04 of 102 CMR 7.00, the regulations which govern day care centers contains more information.

Parents' Rights

Right to visit

You have a right to make unannounced visits to your child's room while your child is present.

Parent Input

The program must have a procedure for allowing your input in the development of center policy and procedure. The program must allow you to make suggestions, but it is up to the program to decide whether or not they will be implemented.

Conferences

You have a right to request an individual conference with the program's staff. The licensee has the responsibility to make the staff available.

Meeting prior to admittance

The licensee shall assure that the administrator or his designee meets with you prior to admitting your child to the center.

At the meeting, the licensee in addition to the information contained in this fact sheet, must provide you with: the center's statements of purpose; types of services provided; referral policy; behavior management policy; termination and suspension policy; a list of suggested nutritious foods you could send for snacks and meals, if it is your responsibility; the policy for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect; the transportation plan; a copy of the health care policy (if you request it); procedure for administration of medication; procedures for providing emergency health care and illness exclusion policy and a copy of the fee schedule.

You should also be given the opportunity to visit the center's classrooms either at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of your child.

Program Reports

At least every six (6) months, you should either meet with the center's staff to discuss your child's progress, or receive a written progress report of your child's activities and participation in the center. This report must become part of your child's center record. If your child is an infant or is a child with disabilities, you should receive a written progress report every three (3) months. Center staff must bring any special problems or significant developments, particularly if they regard infants, to your attention as soon as they arise.

Your Child's Records

Information contained in your child's records is privileged and confidential. The center's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to anyone implementing the program plan for your child without written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

Access to the record

You should be able to have access to your child's records. The center must provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is located in more than one location. The center must have procedures regarding access, duplication and dissemination of children's records. They must maintain a written log which identifies anyone who has had access or has received any information out of the record. The log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

Amending the record

You have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to your child's record; you also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in your child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If you are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make your objections known;
2. The licensee shall, within one (1) week after the conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If his decision is in your favor, he shall immediately take steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

Charge for copies

The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

Transfer of the record

Upon written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee shall give you your child's record or transfer them to any other person you identify. The center should ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the record.

Responsibility of the Program

Providing Information to the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC)

The licensee must make available to the Office for Children any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes information in your child's records. Authorized employees of the Department are not to remove identifying materials from the center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

All center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to either Department of Children and Families or to the licensee's program administrator. The licensee must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrollment.

Notification of Injury

The licensee must notify you immediately of any injury which requires emergency care. They must also notify you in writing, within twenty-four (24) hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Availability of Regulations

The center must have a copy of CMR 102 7.00 **Standards for the Licensure of Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs**, on the premises, available to any person upon request. If you have questions about any of the regulations, ask your center to show them to you.