

Updates for Center Early Learning Programs

Content Introduction: This type of update includes a requirement introduced in the updated version of Licensing regulations, which was not included in previous versions of Licensing regulations.

For example, the requirements around communicating with parents related to the importance of developmental screenings is introduced in the updated Licensing regulations.

TABLE 2. EXAMPLE OF CONTENT INTRODUCED TO LICENSING REGULATIONS

Previous Version of Licensing Regulation	Updated Version of Licensing Regulation
Not in Previous Version	110-3-0055(1) An early learning provider must inform parents or guardians about the importance of developmental screenings for each child from birth through age five.

Program based staff policies and training
<p>110-300-0110 Program based staff policies and training.</p> <p>(2) Early learning program staff policies must include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Job descriptions, pay dates, and benefits; (c) Professional development expectations and plans; (d) Expectations for attendance and conduct; (e) Early learning program staff responsibilities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (xv) Following non-smoking, vaping, alcohol and drug regulations; (xvii) Religious, equity and cultural responsiveness; (g) A plan that includes how both administrative and child caretaking duties are met when a job requires such dual responsibilities; and (h) Observation, evaluation, and feedback policies. <p>(3) An early learning provider must have and follow written policies requiring staff working, transitioning, or covering breaks with the same classroom or group of children to share applicable information with each other on a daily basis regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A child's health needs, allergies and medication; (b) Any change in a child's daily schedule; (c) Significant educational or developmental information; (d) Any communications from the family; and <p>(e) Information to be shared with the family.</p> <p>(4) An early learning provider must develop, deliver, and document the delivery of early learning staff training specific to the early learning program and premises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Training must be updated with changes in program policies and state or federal regulations.
Parent or guardian handbook and related policies
<p>110-300-0450 Parent or guardian handbook and related policies.</p> <p>(1) An early learning provider must supply to each parent or guardian written policies regarding the early learning program. Each enrolled child's record must have signed documentation stating the parent or guardian reviewed the handbook and early learning program policies. (2) An early learning</p>

provider must have and follow formal written policies in either paper or electronic format, including:

- (b) A family engagement and partnership communication plan;
- (e) Curriculum philosophy on how children learn and develop, and how this philosophy is implemented;
- (g) Expulsion policy;
- (h) Early learning program staff-to-child ratios and classroom types offered, if applicable;
- (i) If the early learning program offers any of the following, they must include a policy for each that applies to their program:
 - (iii) Dual language learning;
 - (vi) Water activities;
 - (viii) How weapons on the premises are secured;
- (n) Information required for the child's record, including:
 - (ii) A plan to keep the child's information confidential; and
 - (iii) Who may legally access the child's information;
- (o) A kindergarten transition plan, if applicable;
- (r) Termination of services policy;
- (u) Policies regarding mixed age groups, if applicable (including when children may be in a mixed age group);
- (v) Description of where the parent or guardian may find and review the early learning program's:
 - (iii) Consistent care policy

Emergency preparedness plan

110-300-0470 Emergency preparedness plan.

(1) An early learning provider must have and follow a written emergency preparedness plan. The plan must be reviewed and approved by the department prior to when changes are made.

Emergency preparedness plans must:

- (f) Be reviewed at program orientation, annually with all early learning program staff with documented signatures, and when the plan is updated; and
 - (g) Be reviewed with parents or guardians when a child is enrolled and when the plan is updated.
- (2) The written emergency preparedness plan must cover at a minimum:
- a. Disaster plans, including fires that may require evacuation:
 - (iv) How the early learning provider will evacuate children, especially those who cannot walk independently. This may include infant evacuation cribs (for center early learning programs), children with disabilities, functional needs requirements, or other special needs;
 - (v) Where the alternate evacuation location is:
 - (vi) What to take when evacuating children, including:
 1. First-aid kit(s);
 2. Copies of emergency contact information;
 3. Child medication records; and
 4. Individual children's medication, if applicable;
 - (vii) How the provider will maintain the required staff-to-child ratio and account for all children;
 - (viii) How parents or guardians will be able to contact the early learning program; and
 - (ix) How children will be reunited with their parents or guardians after the event;



WAC 110-300 POLICY TIP SHEET

- (4) An early learning provider must practice and record emergency drills with staff and children as follows:
- (c) Emergency drills must be conducted with a variety of staff and at different times of the day, including in the evening and during overnight hours for early learning programs that care for children during those hours;

Transportation and off-site activity policy

110-300-0480 Transportation and off-site activity policy.

- (1) An early learning provider must have and follow a transportation and off-site activity policy for personal or public transportation service, or non-motorized travel offered to children in care.
- (a) The transportation and off-site activity policy must include routine trips, which must not exceed two hours per day for any individual child.
- (2) During travel to an off-site activity, an early learning provider must:
- (a) Have the health history, appropriate medication (if applicable), emergency information, and emergency medical authorization forms accessible for each child being transported;
 - (b) Have a phone to call for emergency help;
 - (f) Take attendance using a roll call or other method that assures all children are accounted for each time children begin and end travel to an off-site activity, and every time children enter and exit a vehicle; and
- (3) When an early learning provider supplies the vehicle to transport children in care, the program and provider must:
- (d) Maintain the vehicle temperature at a comfortable level to children;
 - (g) Assure the driver has a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle being driven and a safe driving record for at least the last five years;
 - (h) Prevent any driver with a known condition that would compromise driving, supervision, or evacuation capabilities from operating program vehicles;

Termination of services policy

110-300-0485 Termination of services policy.

An early learning provider may terminate a child's services due to that child's parent or guardian's inability to meet the expectations and requirements of the early learning program. Expectations and requirements of the program may include unpaid bills, continual late arrivals, or a parent, guardian or family member's inappropriate or unsafe behavior in or near early learning program space.

Expulsion policy

110-300-0486 Expulsion policy.

- (1) An early learning provider must have and follow an expulsion policy, pursuant to WAC 110-300-0340.
- (2) An expulsion policy must:
- (a) Provide examples of behavior that could lead to expulsion from the early learning program;
 - (b) Detail steps the provider takes to avoid expelling a child including, but not limited to, environmental and staffing changes;
 - (c) Detail how the provider communicates to the parent or guardian of a child the steps taken under subsection (2)(b) and this section; and
 - (d) Include information that may benefit an expelled child including, but not limited to, community based resources.



Child restraint policy

110-300-0490 Child restraint policy.

- (1) An early learning provider must have and follow a child restraint policy that contains behavior management and practices, pursuant to section WAC 110-300-0335.
- (2) A restraint policy must be:
 - (a) Appropriate for children's developmental level, abilities, and language skills;
 - (b) Directly related to the child's behavior; and
 - (c) Designed to be consistent, fair, and positive
- (3) Family Home Licensees, Center Directors, Assistant Directors, Program Supervisors, Lead Teachers and other appropriate staff members must be trained annually in the program's child restraint policy.
- (4) Only trained staff may restrain a child in care in accordance with WAC 110-300-0335.

Consistent care policy

110-300-0495 Consistent care policy.

- (1) An early learning program must have and follow a policy that promotes the consistent care of children.
- (2) When possible, an early learning provider must be assigned to work with a consistent group of children for much of the day with a goal of building long term, trusting relationships.

Health policy

110-300-0500 Health policy.

- (1) An early learning provider must have and follow a written health policy reviewed and approved by the department that includes the topics listed in subsection (2) of this section. The health policy must be reviewed and approved by the department when changes are made, and as otherwise necessary.
- (2) An early learning program's health policy must meet the requirements of this chapter including, but not limited to:
 - (a) A prevention of exposure to blood and body fluids plan;
 - (b) Meals, snacks, and food services including guidelines for food allergies and food brought from home;
 - (d) Observing children for signs of illness daily;
 - (n) Dental hygiene practices and education.

