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**Day Care Licensing**

**Annual Report to the General Assembly**

***FY 2021***

This report is a requirement of the 2012 amendment to Section 7.10 of the Illinois Child Care Act (PA 97-1096) that mandates the Department of Children and Family Services provide the General Assembly a comprehensive annual report on its progress in meeting performance measures and goals related to child day care licensing.

September 30, 2021

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**:

Introduction ………………………………………………………………………….……3

Child Care Licensing Employees …………………………………………….….….……4

Funding Sources and Expenditures…………………………………………….…………7

Staff Qualifications…………………………………………………………….…………9

Staffing Levels and Caseload Data……………………………………………….……....11

Quarterly Data on Application Disposition……………………………….……………...14

Quarterly Data on Renewal Disposition ………………………….……………………...17

Quarterly Data on Annual Monitoring………………………………….….…………….19

Data on Provider Requests for Supervisory Review………………….……….……...…20

Progress on Key Indicators…………………………………………….……………...…21

Data on Complaints and Completion………………………….……………...……….…23

Day Care Orientation Data and Information………………….………………...………...24

Department Trainings……………………………………………………………...…….25

.
Efforts to Coordinate with Other Agencies……………………………………...………28

Impact of Federal CCBDG Reauthorization……………………….…………………….30

Technology Upgrade Information………….……………………….……………………30

Day Care Licensing Representative Education/Experience Qualification Criteria…...….32

Day Care Licensing Staff Expenditures FYs 2010 to 2020……….……………………...35

Day Care Staff Expenditures by Staff Type……………………………………...…...….36

**INTRODUCTION**

This report is a requirement of the 2012 amendment to the Illinois Child Care Act that

mandates the Department of Children and Family Services provide the General

Assembly with a comprehensive annual report on its progress in meeting performance

measures and goals related to child day care licensing. The data sets and performance

measures included in this report were developed in conjunction with the provider

community, advocates and other stakeholders.

Day care licensing staff are responsible for licensing day care homes, group day care

Homes, and day care centers as well as assessing facility requests for exemption from licensure. Renewals for the above three facility types are conducted on a three-year

cycle. Licensing is a limited form of regulatory administration that grants the licensee

the authority to operate the facility. Unlike most other licenses issued in Illinois, there is

no fee to receive or renew an Illinois day care license. Licensing staff utilize and apply

provisions of the Child Care Act, and apply specific rules related to each facility type (Rules 406, 407 and 408), Rule 377 (Facilities Exempt from Licensure), Rule 383 (Licensing Enforcement) and Rule 385 (Background Checks) to perform their duties.

Licensing staff monitor licensees through at least one unannounced visit per year as well

as through the investigation of complaints regarding both licensed and unlicensed facility

operation. Unlike many regulatory agencies, DCFS does not have the authority to assess

fines when licensing violations are cited. Instead, DCFS has to rely on best efforts to

screen out unfit licensees during the application or renewal process and a combination of

provider education and voluntary corrective action plans to prevent and correct

violations. To prevent major disruptions to families, the Department’s limited authority

to revoke a license is used only in the most extraordinary circumstances.

As of June 30, 2021, there were 9,372 total licensed Day care facilities:

2,867 licensed Day care centers

5,764 licensed Day care homes

 741 licensed Group Day care homes

9,372 total licensed Day care facilities

This represents a decline in total licensed child care providers, down 333 facilities from 9,705 on July 1, 2020. This decline can be attributed to several factors ranging from the economy, increase in unemployment, reported incidents of low enrollment in certain geographical areas, and the COVID-19 pandemic and to the continued increase of license exempt school-age-only programs totaling 420 school age exemptions granted in FY 2021. There is an increase of 106 exempt programs in 2021 compared to 314 such exemptions issued in 2020.

**SECTION 1: DETAILS ON THE FUNDING FOR CHILD DAY CARE LICENSING**

 **A. Total Number of Full-time employees working on child day care licensing**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Licensing staff as of July 1, 2021 (per Office of Employee Support) |
|  | Active Head count | Actual Headcount | Pending Vacancies |
| Day Care LicensingRepresentatives(DCLRs) | 112 | 108 | 12 |
| Day Care LicensingSupervisors (PSAs) | 20 |  17 | 3 |
| Regional LicensingAdministrators (PSAs) | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Associate Deputy Director  | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Support Staff(OfficeAssociates) | 14 | 8 | 6 |
| Staff on Leave orother assignment | (4) | 0 | -- |
| Total Day Care Staff | 155 | 136 |  23 |
| Total Active DayCare Staff |  | 136 |  |

As of 7-1-21, there were 108 Day Care Licensing Representatives (DCLR) on active status which includes 2 on long-term leave 2 on Maternity leave. So, actual DCLR staff available is 108. There are 17 vacancies as well. There were 20 management staff in the Division’s headcount: 17 supervisors, 4 Regional Administrator positions, of which one remains vacant with a supervisor also serving as acting RLA for Central Region of the State. There is one active Regional administrator for Cook county, who also serves as the Acting Associate Deputy Director for the Division. The Associate Deputy Director position is currently vacant. Vacancies are posted and filled as they arise, keeping in mind the Division’s overall assigned maximum head count and giving priority to those areas where caseloads are highest, and vacancies have remained unfilled the longest.

There are presently 8 Office Associate clerical positions assigned to licensing teams spread across the state. There is an Office Associate position that staffs the Day Care/Adoption Information Line and one additional office associate that acts as receptionist at 1911 S. Indiana Ave site in Chicago (where all Cook County licensing representatives, supervisors, the Day Care Information Line, Cook Regional Licensing Administrator, and The Deputy Director etc. are housed).

**Present Vacancies Statewide: 23 Day Care Licensing Representatives, 2 Supervisors and 6 office associates. We are currently operating with only 108 DCLR’s statewide and it is important to note that the staffing number have continuously fluctuated and is not steadily consistent as staff come and go sporadically.**

**FY 21 Funded headcount for Day Care Licensing Unit was 142 staff.**

**It is important to note that in FY20 the overtime pay out for this Division was 26,866.92. In FY21 it is 43,975.86 which is an increase of 61% which is indicative of the pandemic, working on weekends, staffing shortages, increased caseloads and the incredible commitment of the licensing staff**  **to ensure that license are granted quickly, monitored timely and safe environments and facilities are ensured for children, families and the communities.**

**FY 2021 STAFFING TRENDS**

This year continued to see swings in staffing on almost a monthly basis. FY 2021 saw the retirement of additional staff and the transfer of 5 staff to promotions or higher paying positions either within or outside of the Department. There were 4 new hires/transfers during the year.

Unfortunately, hiring a new intern or DCLR (Day care Licensing Representatives) does not produce immediate measurable effects with respect to improving the Division’s performance. As mentioned previously, Day Care Licensing Representatives and Supervisors must undergo very specific training on applicable Statutes, Rules and Procedures and **get certified in those statutes and rules.** They study for and are required to receive a passing grade on four tests-- the Illinois Child Care Act, and Rules 406, 407, and 408 (Day Care Home, Center and Group Day Care Home standards). Additionally, they must familiarize themselves with other Rules, including Rule 377 (License Exempt Facilities), Rule 382 (Advertising by Unlicensed Facilities), Rule 383 (Monitoring, Complaints and Enforcement), Rule 385 (Background Checks), and 386 (Children’s Product Safety) before they can make licensing recommendations and carry caseloads. Adequate training is a key step in insuring consistency among practice statewide.

 **Names of all funding used to support child day care licensing:**

1. Child Care Development Fund

2. General Revenue Fund

 **C. The amount of expenditures claimed against federal funding sources**

Child Care Development Fund (by IL fiscal year)

Please see table on following page.

|  |
| --- |
| **Child Care Development Fund—FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR FIGURES** |
|  | **QE****12/31/13** | **QE****3/31/14** | **QE****6/30/14** | **QE****9/30/14** | **FFY 2014** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures** | **DHS Claim Day Care Licensing**  |  | 7,357,722 | 7,210,512 | 7,373,443 | 7,173,803 | 29,115,480 |
| **Allocation Percentage** | 62.24% | 58.88% | 64.68% | 64.18% | 62.50% |
| **Total CCDF Claim** | 4,579,538 | 4,245,494 | 4,769,457 | 4,604,106 | 18,198,595 |
|  |
| **FFY 2015** |  | **QE 12/31/14** | **QE**  **3/31/15** | **QE****6/30/15** | **QE****9/30/15** | **FFY 2015** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures** | **DHS Claim Day Care Licensing** |  | 7,414,833 | 7,199,652 | 7,445,003 |  7,159,161 | 22,059,538 |
| **Allocation Percentage** | 66.19% | 66.94% | 67.18% | 64.31% | 66.77% |
| **Total CCDF Claim** | 4,908,068 | 4,819,406 | 5,001,703 | 4,604,013 | 14,729,177 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **FY2016** |  | **QE****12/31/15** | **QE****3/31/16** | **QE****6/30/16** | **QE****9/31/16** | **FFY 2016** |
| **DCFS Day****Care Licensing Expenditures** | **DHS Claim Day Care Licensing** |  | 7,017,478 | 6,994,432 | 7,179,508 | 6,757,614 | 21,191,418 |
| **Allocation Percentage** |  | 60.517% | 60.48% | 62.55% | 62.53% | 61.18% |
| **Total CCDF Claim** |  | 4,246,787 | 4,229,978 | 4,491,078 | 4,225,559 | 12,967,843 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **FY 2017** |  | **QE****12/31/16** | **QE****3/31/17** | **QE****6/30/17** | **QE****9/31/17**  | **FFY 2017** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures**  | **DHS Claim****Day Care Licensing** |  |  7,030,915  |  6,621,763  |  7,145,295  | 6,721,032 | 27,519,004 |
| **Background Checks** |  | 158,762 | 123,550 | 160,117 | 156,840 | 599,269 |
| **Adjusted Day Care Licensing** |  |  6,872,153  |  6,498,213  |  6,985,177  | 6,564,192 | 26,919,735 |
| **Allocation Percentage** |  | 62.53% | 62.33% | 63.08% | 62.78% | 62.68% |
| **TOTAL CCDF Claim** |  |  4,297,278  |  4,050,340  | 4,406,314 | 4,121,341 | 16,875,272 |
|  |
| **FY 2018** |  | **QE 12-31-17** | **QE 3-31-18** | **QE 6-30-18** | **QE 9-31-18** | **FFY 2018** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures** | **DHS Claim****Day Care****Licensing** |  | 6,142,207 | 6,783,442 | 6,931,481 | TBD | 19,857,129 |
| **Background Checks** |  | 168,712 | 164,063 | 173,971 | 506,704 |
| **Adjusted Day Care Licensing** |  | 5,973,495 | 6,619,379 | 6,757,510 | 19,350,383 |
| **Allocation Percentage** |  | 62.54% | 62.68% | 63.11% | 62.77% |
| **TOTAL CCDF Claim** |  | 3,735,835 | 4,148,808 | 4,264,441 | 12,149,085 |
|  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY 2019** | **QE 12-31-18** | **QE 3-31-19** | **QE 6-30-19** | **QE 9-30-19** | **FFY 2019** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures**  | **DHS Claim Day Care Licensing** |  6,930,925  |  6,820,056  |  7,164,541  |  6,648,627  |  27,564,149  |
|  | **Background Checks** |  133,156  |  148,659  |  163,170  |  140,558  |  585,543  |
|  | **Adjusted Day Care Licensing** |  6,797,769  |  6,671,397  |  7,001,371  |  6,508,069  |  26,978,606  |
| **Allocation Percentage** | 61.77% | 61.67% | 63.22% | 63.53% | 62.55% |
| **Total CCDF Claim** |  **4,199,067**  |  **4,114,553**  |  **4,426,057**  |  **4,134,860**  |  **16,874,537**  |
|   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **FFY 2020** | **QE 12-31-19** | **QE 3-31-20** | **QE 6-30-20** | **QE 9-30-20** | **FFY 2020** |
| **DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures**  | **DHS Claim Day Care Licensing** |  6,957,633  |  7,049,643  |  6,923,479  |  6,897,975   |   27,828,730  |
|  | **Background Checks** |  179,711  |  214,060  |  110,123  |  194,970   |   698,864  |
|  | **Adjusted Day Care Licensing** |  6,777,921  |  6,835,584  |  6,813,357  |  6,703,005   |   27,129,866  |
| **Allocation Percentage** | 64.76% | 64.54% | 63.54% | 63.57%  | 64.10% |
| **Total CCDF Claim** |  **4,389,465**  |  **4,411,719**  |  **4,329,137**  |  **4,260,947**   |  **17,391,267**  |
|   |   |  |  |  |   |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY 2021** | **QE 12-31-20** | **QE 3-31-21** | **QE 6-30-21** | **QE 9-30-21** | **FFY 2021** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing | 6,717,081  |  6,388,558  |   6,747,942  |   | 19,853,581 |
|   | Background Checks |  198,817  |  188,623  |   176,579  |   | 564,019 |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  6,518,264  |  6,199,935  |  6,571,363  |  -  | 19,289,562  |
| Allocation Percentage | 62.72% | 64.51% |  62.25% |   | 63.16% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **4,088,308**  |  **3,999,378**  |  **4,090,621**  |  **-**  |  **12,178,308**  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

**D. The identity of federal funding sources: Child Care Development Fund**

**E. How funds are appropriated, including appropriations for line staff, support staff, supervisory staff, and training and other expenses and the funding history of such licensing since fiscal year 2010.**

Please refer to chart of appropriations on pages 29-30.

**SECTION 2: CURRENT STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS OF DAY CARE LICENSING REPRESENTATIVES AND DAY CARE LICENSING SUPERVISORS IN COMPARISON WITH STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS SPECIFICATIONS IN THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS:**

**As of 6-30-2020:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Field of Study** | **Day Care Licensing Representative Qualifications** | **PSA Qualifications** |
| **Bachelor’s Degrees** | **Master’s Degrees** | **Bachelor’s Degrees** | **Master’s Degrees** |
| Social Work (BSW or MSW) | 18 | 27 | 1 | 20 |
| Psychology | 19 | 8 |  | 1 |
| Social Studies  | 13 |  |  |  |
| Education | 38 | 17 |  | 1 |
| Law Enforcement | 8 | 2 |  |  |
| Fine Arts and Letters | 5 |  |  |  |
| Home Economics | 3 |  |  |  |
| Biological Sciences | 1 |  |  |  |
| Business Management | 1 |  |  |  |
| Non-MSW Social Work | 9 | 9 |  |  |
| Statistics | 1 |  |  |  |

Does not include undergraduate degrees for those with graduate degrees.

Please begin on page 27 for details on the “*Current Education & Experience Qualifying Criteria”*that CMS uses when considering Day Care Licensing Representative candidates.

**SECTION 3: DATA HISTORY FOR FY 2010 TO FY 2020 ON DCLR CASELOADS AND STAFFING LEVELS IN ALL AREAS OF THE STATE:**

The average day care caseload statewide as of July 1, 2021 is 88 facilities per worker.

**When actual workload based on facility type is considered (known as weighted**

**caseloads) the average rises to 119 facilities per worker.**

Day Care caseloads may either be blended (a mixture of both homes and centers) or

specialized (only homes or only centers). One region remains specialized and the three others are now blended. No region’s performance, however, can be attributed strictly to the manner in which cases are assigned**.**

With regard to the number of cases in a caseload, it is important to keep in mind that all caseloads are not equal. For instance, a caseload of 75 Day care centers would not be comparable to one with a case load of 75 Day care homes. The work of licensing Day care centers, which can serve sometimes hundreds of children, employ scores of staff, and have many more rules relative to programming, records, equipment, etc., is significantly more detailed and complex. Licensing a center is more complicated and time-consuming than a home. To better illustrate the fact that a worker with 75 Day care centers in their case load would be overloaded, while a worker with only 75 Day care homes would not have enough, the figures are also presented for “weighted caseloads.” At present, the Department does not have AFSCME-negotiated average caseload standards; these weights and figures are meant solely for illustrative purposes.

Only for the purposes of this report, we have assigned values of 2 points to Day care centers, 1 ½ points to Group Day care homes and 1 point to Day care homes. Caseloads for each region were then configured considering the total number of each of the three facility types. **The results indicate that when facilities are weighted, the statewide average caseload is comparable to serving 108 facilities per person.**

**The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommends a caseload average of 50:1 to allow for bi-annual visits. This would require the Department to employ 188-day care licensing representatives, which will be 81 more licensing representatives than the Department currently employs or 57% more staff than what DCFS have now for Day care licensing and monitoring.**

The Department is striving for a 75:1 average statewide, which at current figures would require 127 DCLRS against the 120 positions we have now with 4 on long term leave. So, we only have 107 DCLR’s available now and so an increase of 16% more staff are required.

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2010** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 43 | 3,902 | 4,946 | 91 | 115 |
| **Central** | 40 | 3,251 | 3,880 | 81 | 97 |
| **Southern** | 16 | 1,410 | 1,801 | 88 | 113 |
| **Cook** | 56 | 5,132 | 6,534 | 92 | 117 |
| **Statewide** | 155 | 13,695 | 17,161 | 88 | 111 |
| **FY 2011** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR**  |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 41 | 3,821 | 4,880 | 93 | 119 |
| **Central** | 31 | 3,216 | 3,840 | 87 | 104 |
| **Southern** | 16 | 1,379 | 1,660 | 86 | 104 |
| **Cook** | 54 | 5,066 | 6,505 | 94 | 121 |
| **Statewide** | 148 | 13,482 | 16,885 | 91 | 114 |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **FY 2012** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 40 | 3,691 | 4,753 | 92 | 119 |
| **Central** | 34 | 3,091 | 3,707 | 91 | 109 |
| **Southern** | 13 | 1,329 | 1,726 | 102 | 133 |
| **Cook** | 51 | 5,051 | 6,522 | 99 | 128 |
| **Statewide** | 138 | 13,162 | 16,708 | 95 | 121 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2013** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** |  34 |  3,532 |  4,607 | 104 | 136 |
| **Central** |  29 |  2,965 |  3,574 |  102 | 123 |
| **Southern** |  14 |  1,272 |  1,655 |  91 | 118 |
| **Cook** |  48 |  5,001 |  6,511 |  104 | 136 |
| **Statewide** |  125 |  12,770 |  16,347 |  102 |  131 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2014** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 34 | 3,434 | 4,526 | 101 | 133 |
| **Central** | 34 | 2,776 | 3,338 | 82 | 92 |
| **Southern** | 14 |  1,118 |  1,545 |  80 | 110 |
| **Cook**  | 48 | 4,903 | 6,452 | 102 | 134 |
| **Statewide** | 130 | 12,968 | 16,513 | 100 | 127 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2015** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 32 | 3,265 | 4,384 | 102 | 137 |
| **Central** | 26 | 2,593 | 3,130 | 100 | 120 |
| **Southern** | 12 | 1122 | 1,483 | 94 | 124 |
| **Cook**  | 47 | 4,787 | 6,279 | 102 | 134 |
| **Statewide** | 117 | 11,817 | 15,276  | 101 | 131 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2016** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 29 | 3,124 | 3,521 | 108 | 121 |
| **Central** | 29 | 2,476 | 3,006 | 85 | 104 |
| **Southern** | 15 | 1,058 | 1,416 | 71 | 94 |
| **Cook**  | 44 | 4,605 | 6,164 | 105 | 140 |
| **Statewide** | 117 |  11,263 |  14,107 |  96 |  121 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2017** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 30 |  2,918 |  3923 | 97 | 131 |
| **Central** | 27 |  2,388 |  2,908 | 84 | 108 |
| **Southern** | 13 |  1,009 |  1,358 | 78 | 104 |
| **Cook**  | 50 |  4,449 |  6,010 | 89 | 120 |
| **Statewide** | 120 |  10, 764 |  14,199 | 90 | 118 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2018** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 33 | 2778 | 3755 | 69 | 114 |
| **Central** | 32 | 2252 | 2761 | 70 | 86 |
| **Southern** | 14 | 951 | 1285 | 68 | 92 |
| **Cook**  | 47 | 4281 | 5828 | 91 | 124 |
| **Statewide** | 126 | 10262 | 13629 | 81 | 108 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2019** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 29 | 2699 | 3663 | 93 | 126 |
| **Central** | 31 | 2174 | 2664 | 70 | 86 |
| **Southern** | 11 | 904 | 1225 | 82 | 111 |
| **Cook**  | 50 | 4257 | 5847 | 85 | 117 |
| **Statewide** | 121 | 10,034 | 13,399 | 83 | 111 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2020** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 27 | 2648 | 3599.5 | 99 | 134 |
| **Central** | 30 | 2132 | 2622 | 72 | 88 |
| **Southern** | 15 | 856 | 1165 | 58 | 77 |
| **Cook**  | 48 | 4205 | 5799 | 88 | 121 |
| **Statewide** | 120 | 9,841 | 13,185.5 | 83 | 110 |

|  |
| --- |
| **FY 2021** |
| **Region** | **#DCLRS** | **TOTAL # OF FACILITIES** | **Average Caseload per DCLR** |
|  |  | **Regular** | **Weighted** | **Regular** | **Weighted** |
| **Northern** | 28 | 2487 | 3398.5 | 88 | 121.3 |
| **Central** | 29 | 2005 | 2477.5 | 69.13 | 88.48 |
| **Southern** | 13 | 813 | 1112.5 | 62.5 | 85.57 |
| **Cook**  | 37 | 4095 | 5663 | 110.67 | 153 |
| **Statewide** | 107 | 9,400 | 12651.5 | 87.85 | 118.23 |

**SECTION 4: QUARTERLY DATA ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:**

1. **The percentage of new applications disposed-of within 90 days**

The DCFS-imposed 90-day time frame for the disposition of an initial application is applicable to all three facility types. This date was negotiated with AFSCME solely for assessing work performance for employee annual performance evaluations. The 90-day timeframe is subject to many outside influences and factors which can cause delays, including but not limited to: weather and construction issues, required background check assessments of criminal convictions, and inspections from outside agencies such as local zoning bodies, Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health departments, Lead and Radon tests and Licensing staffing shortages in some areas. Provider preparation and willingness to correct deficiencies in a timely manner remains a major factor contributing to delay in the disposition of initial licensing applications.

The 90-day timeframe begins on the date the application is data-entered into the DCFS computer system. This data-entry is not made until the application has been received, logged in to insure tracking, and reviewed to determine that it is complete and correct. Approximately 50% of initial applications are returned to the applicant because they are either incomplete or incorrect. The on-line application project has been delayed due to the Department’s pursuit of improved technology functions via the adoption of CCWIS (Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System), which is projected to take appx. 45 months and will eventually include the decommission of the SACWIS, CYCIS and MARS systems currently in operation.

**The percentage of new applications disposed-of within 90 days:**

 **FY 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Quarter 1** | **Quarter 2** | **Quarter 3** | **Quarter 4** | **Annual Average** |
| **Northern** | 23% | 48% | 74% | 65% | 40% |
| **Central** | 65% | 94% | 80% | 87% | 82% |
| **Southern** | 14% | 100% | 100% | 92% | 77% |
| **Cook** | 28% | 54% | 66% | 75% | 55% |
| **Statewide** | 31% | 61% | 75% | 77% | 62% |

During the reporting period, significant factors in disposition timeliness is the background clearance delays caused by the new requirements of the Child Care Development Block Grant, which redefined background clearances to now include an FBI criminal background check for all individuals subject to fingerprinting as well as out of state Child abuse and neglect history check, out of state Sex offender check and Criminal background check if they lived out of state within the last 5 years. This is in addition to the Illinois state police and FBI criminal background check. The Department had to order FBI criminal background check for tens of thousands of current employees. **Such a backlog is behind us now and currently criminal background check is not a contributing factor in disposition delays.**

The Background check unit with extremely limited staff due to the pandemic for FY 21 the unit in Cook which typically has 18 staff managed to process 38,878 Back Ground checks for Day Care Centers with 9 staff. The Background check unit in Springfield processed over 9,024 BG checks for Day Care homes & Group Day Care Homes.

It is also important to note the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on licensing’s ability to complete initial applications in a timely manner. On March 9, 2020, Governor Pritzker declared all counties in Illinois a disaster area in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Executive Order 2020-10 called for the suspension of operation of all licensed Day care centers, day care homes, and group day care homes in order to protect the health and safety of children and staff. Therefore, initial inspections, medical verification and other municipal inspections that are some of the major items that are needed to complete an application were not able to take place impacting our ability to recommend licensure as well the applicant’s inability to operate during this time anyway.

The Governor’s Executive Order 2020-10 however allowed unlicensed homes that generally could only care for a maximum of three children were allowed to care for up to six children of essential workers during this time without a license.

On May 29, 2020, the Governor announced Restore Illinois, a comprehensive phased plan to safely reopen the State’s economy, get people back to work, and ease social restrictions. Illinois has now entered Phase V of Restore Illinois. On August 4, 2021, Governor Pritzker issued Executive Order 2021-181 requiring all day care facilities in Illinois to follow the joint guidance issued by Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of children, staff, and visitors.

Though the Restore Illinois offers a comprehensive phased plan there are still ongoing residual effect of the pandemic that is effecting the work processes and full functionality of how work is being done and the time in which it is now taking to get done with such influences of COVID positive licensing staff, day care staff, lack of day care staff to staff child care facilities and that are also qualified, therefore timely recommendations cannot be made if applicant failed to meet the minimum requirements of the law and rule.

1. **The percentage of licenses renewed on time**

Despite no statutory reference, license renewals are considered “on time” if the recommendation is complete and data-entered on or before the expiration date of the license. Licensing Rules do require, however, that a renewal application packet be mailed to the licensee no later than six months prior to the expiration date of the license. A renewal application is considered “timely” if it is received back from the licensee no later than three months prior to the expiration of the license. Renewal applications can be submitted by the licensee up to and including the day of the expiration with no significant consequences to the provider. The renewal study is conducted, all the while, the licensee is allowed to continue care uninterrupted. The licensee may still bill for CCAP (subsidy) children and food program reimbursements while the renewal application is pending, as DCFS considers a timely renewal application to have the “full force and effect” of an actual license. We experience a lack of sense of urgency from the part of licensed providers in submitting renewal applications and supporting documentation on a timely basis. We continue to remind and support all providers to submit renewal applications on a timely basis and as early as possible.

Licensees who fail to submit their renewal packets prior to the three months before expiration receive letters, e-mails, and phone calls from their licensing representatives to remind them of the pending expiration of their license in an effort to encourage the licensee to submit their application to allow sufficient time for the renewal study and processing.

Licensees who fail to submit a renewal application until after their license expires are not subject to renewal. The license has expired and if an application is received well after the expiration, it is now considered an initial license application, as there is no active license to renew. If a subsequent license is granted, it is not back-dated. There will be a gap or lapse in licensure between the two licenses.

During this reporting period, the number of renewals considered as “on time” has steadily decreased with each quarter, due to delays by the providers in meeting the required standards and external inspection certifications including Fire Marshall clearances that are required to issue the license renewal. Additional steps in the background check as required by the Federal CCDBG statute (Child Care Block Development Grant) caused some delays due to the lack of staff resources. Renewals cannot be issued without the appropriate clearances and updates. Besides, the work load of the background check unit is increased by 30% annually with the new requirement that all licensees and employees of Day care should have a comprehensive criminal background check repeated every 5 years or less. Additional head count has been authorized for the background check unit and staff are being hired even though the unit is not fully staffed yet. So, the Department is addressing the issue by increasing Background Clearance Unit staff. At present, Department is conducting a comprehensive background check of Day care employees and licensees at every license renewal time. That means a full background check of Day care employees and providers are done at three-year intervals or at renewal cycles. Further, the providers are slow in responding to Background check hits that are waiver eligible. Repeat reminders and follow up is required to get their recommendation to issue a waiver or not. Until then, however, delays in issuing and renewing licenses will be observed. By all means, priority status has been given to renewal applicants, because they are currently operating and actively providing care to children and any disruption to this ability to provide care would be detrimental to families.

This function as well was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Governor’s Executive Order 2020-10 of Day care closures. Pending renewals for which onsite inspection had already been completed and physical safety varication had been done within 90 days of the recommendations were processed with a recommendation to renew the license. The Department in its efforts to continue to process renewals even still during this time of halted operations, when possible, conducted renewal visits virtually under supervisory consultation and approval in an effort to keep numerous licenses from expiring.

The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic that was noted above that effected the initial application also applies as a major impact for the renewal processes and recommendations. The pandemic caused day care facilities to lose numerous staff who did not wish to return to work in the child care arena. This has caused an already hemorrhaging field that continues to suffer from a lack of qualified staff as well as potential candidates that are seeking early childhood education as a field of choice. Though there remains a lack of candidates this does not equate to the need to lessen the qualification of /for staff as it remains imperative to ensure that children receive quality education that is developmentally and age appropriate to insure mile stones are met to increase the easy of their transition into mainstream education and to insure a successful transition.

**The Deputy Director is directly managing and providing leadership to both background check units (Chicago and Springfield units) to ensure optimum productivity, staff training, necessary support and direction. The background check units also experienced significant staff turnover including managers and supervisors during the reporting period. But the units are stable currently, even though there are critical vacancies and we are making all efforts to fill those vacancies as qualified candidates are available. However, DCFS licensing staff and the provider community are very pleased with the quick turnaround time of background clearances.**

**Percentages of licenses renewed prior to expiration:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Quarter 1** | **Quarter 2** | **Quarter 3** | **Quarter 4** | **Annual Average** |
| **Northern** | 88% | 90% | 92 % | 91% | 90% |
| **Central** | 100% | 98 % | 97 % | 92 % | 97% |
| **Southern** | 91% | 100% | 100% | 95% | 95% |
| **Cook** | 90% | 93 % | 87 % | 86% | 89% |
| **Statewide** | 90% | 93 % | 90 % | 88% | 90 % |

The Illinois Child Care Act [Section 4.5(h)] requires Day care centers, Day care homes, and Group day care homes to be monitored “at least annually.” These visits are conducted on an unannounced basis (no prior knowledge is given to the licensee as to when the visit will occur) at each facility in the two years between initial and renewal or between renewals.

An AFSCME-negotiated agreement allows for the visits to be considered timely for the purpose of a DCLRS’ annual employee performance evaluation if the visit is within a 90-day timeframe around the license’s anniversary date—no more than 60 days prior or 30 days following the license anniversary. The Child Care Act does not stipulate a specific timeframe for completion, other than the monitoring should be conducted on an “annual” basis.

The data for annual unannounced monitoring visits is presented in detail in the table on page 18. It is given for both the 60/30 union-negotiated timeframe (columns marked “E” in green) and for a rolling “annual” calculation of the past 365 days (columns marked “A” in blue).

With staffing challenges, staff turnover and uncovered cases being assigned to other licensing staff or other teams, if the 60/30 timeframe cannot be met, the monitoring requirement is not overlooked until next year. Overdue annuals are considered a priority and the expectation for DCLRs is that they be conducted even if it beyond the 60/30 timeframe.

Please refer to the chart on Page 18 for additional data.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Completion of Annual Unannounced Monitoring** |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | Quarter 1  |   | Quarter 2 |  | Quarter 3 |  | Quarter 4 |  | FY 2021 |
| 60/30 Eval | FY Annual |  | 60/30 Eval | FY Annual |  | 60/30 Eval | FY Annual |  | 60/30 Eval | FY Annual |  | 60/30 Eval | FY Annual |
| Northern |
| DCC | 20 % | 64 % |   | 45 % | 68 % |   | 44 % | 75 % |   | 62 % | 78 % |   | 44 % | 55 % |
| DCH | 13 % | 53 % |  | 30 % | 51 % |  | 35 % | 53 % |  | 51 % | 60 % |  | 32 % | 54 % |
| GDCH | 18 % | 56 % |  | 37 % | 62 % |  | 48 % | 62 % |  | 40 % | 69 % |  | 37 % | 62 % |
| Total | 15 % | 57 % |   | 35 % | 57 % |   | 39 % | 61 % |   | 54 % | 66 % |   | 36 % | 60 % |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| Central  |
| DCC | 49 % | 86 % |   | 77 % | 87% |   | 49% | 89% |   | 57% | 88% |   | 59% | 88% |
| DCH | 47 % | 82 % |  | 65 % | 86% |  | 59% | 84% |  | 64% | 83% |  | 59% | 84% |
| GDCH |  48 % |  81% |  | 55 % | 88% |  | 52% | 89% |  | 63% | 85% |  | 53% | 85% |
| Total | 47 % | 83 % |   | 67% | 86% |   | 57% | 85% |   | 62% | 84% |   | 57% | 85% |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| Southern |
| DCC | .082% | 69% |  | 56% | 84% |  | 50% | 88% |  | 62% | 87% |  | 46% | 82% |
| DCH | 24% | 64% |  | 57% | 77% |  | 67% | 80% |  | 66% | 82% |  | 53% | 76% |
| GDCH | .38% | 77% |  | 81% | 81% |  | 64% | 92% |  | 56% | 91% |  | 59% | 85% |
| Total | 21% | 66% |   | 58% | 80% |   | 62% | 84% |   | 64% | 84% |   | 51% | 78% |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Cook |
| DCC | 17% | 51% |   | 44% | 59% |   | 45% | 62% |   | 48% | 64% |   | 39% | 59% |
| DCH | 12% | 52% |  | 35% | 52% |  | 36% | 38% |  | 42% | 51% |  | 28% | 48% |
| GDCH | 24% | 60% |  | 45% | 59% |  | 32% | 56% |  | 54% | 60% |  | 38% | 59% |
| Total | 15% | 53% |   | 39% | 55% |   | 38% | 55% |   | 45% | 56% |   | 32% | 55% |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| Statewide |
| DCC | 22% | 61% |   | 51% | 68% |   | 46% | 72% |   | 50% | 70% |   | 43% | 68% |
| DCH | 22% | 61% |  | 44% | 62% |  | 45% | 57% |  | 46% | 61% |  | 40% | 61% |
| GDCH | 27% | 63% |  | 46% | 66% |  | 43% | 66% |  | 48% | 67% |  | 41% | 65% |
| Total | 23% | 62% |   | 46% | 64% |   | 45% | 66% |   | 47% | 65% |   | 41% | 64% |

1. **Percentage of provider requests for supervisory review**

When cited for one or more violations, all licensees are given a standardized letter of notice to clearly identify and notify which rules were in violation and how, to review the correction plan that was developed with their input, and to reinforce the corrective plan completion time-frame. The letter also contains very specific language designed to inform the licensee of their right to appeal the finding of violation and how to request such an appeal. The letter contains an offer of a Supervisory Review, to be conducted face-to-face with the licensee, the licensing representative, and licensing supervisor. In some cases, where a licensee reasonably cannot attend in person, the Supervisory Review may be conducted via telephone.

The purpose of the Supervisory Review is to address the violation(s) and the parameters of the correction plan. A licensee may present evidence to support his/her stance that they were not in violation of the Rule, may discuss their concerns that the Rule was misapplied or misinterpreted by the licensing representative, or may re-negotiate the terms of the correction plan. Depending upon the evidence presented by both parties, a Supervisor may uphold or overturn the violation, or may amend the correction plan to extend the date to allow additional time for correction. Attendance at Supervisor Review is voluntary on the part of the licensee. There is no adverse consequence if the licensee does not take advantage of the offer of the Review, only that the cited violation(s) will stand.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Supervisory Reviews Offered |   | Supervisory Reviews Requested  |
|   | **DCH** | **GDCH** | **DCC** | **Total** |  | **DCH** | **GDCH** | **DCC** | **Total** |
| **Quarter 1 Total** | **233** | **23** | **203** | **459** |  | **0** | **0** | **6** | **6** |
| **Quarter 2 Total** | **178** | **18** | **182** | **378** |  | **2** | **1** | **8** | **11** |
| **Quarter 3 Total** | **177** | **23** | **197** | **397** |  | **1** | **0** | **9** | **10** |
| **Quarter 4 Total** | **311** | **28** | **191** | **530** |  | **1** | **2** | **0** | **3** |
| **Annual Totals** | **899** | **92** | **773** | **1764** |  | **4** | **3** | **23** | **30** |
| **Percentage** |  |  |  |  |  | **.0044%** | **.033%** | **.030%** | **.017%** |

The chart above details the number of times in FY 2021 that a licensee was cited for one or more violations, per facility type, and the number of times a provider requested a Supervisory Review to discuss the citation(s). Please keep in mind that licensees may receive multiple visits (based on their compliance history) so it cannot be construed that the number of reviews offered equals the number of individual licensees cited. Often the same licensees are cited during the year at multiple monitoring visits or complaints, or a combination of both.

It should be noted although only 30 Supervisory Reviews were requested by providers, 55 Reviews were conducted in total. This discrepancy between those requested and those held illustrates the licensing practice of requesting licensees come in for a Review to discuss violations, patterns of non-compliance, or other concerns held by the Department. Licensees may not have requested the Review, but the Licensing Supervisor and Representative felt that the matter was important enough to make such a request of the licensee. Often, these reviews are a prime opportunity to provide consultation, foster cooperation and support. Of course, the licensee is at liberty to decline such a request with no consequences. Due to the pandemic most of these reviews were conducted virtually.

**G. Progress on Adopting the Key Indicators System**

In 2014 DCFS entered into a contract with the National Association of Regulatory Administration (NARA) for the purpose of development of Key Indicators and Weighted Licensing Violations. The assignment of weights to the licensing standards was completed first by means of a survey of 100+ stakeholders to rank each licensing standard with a weight from 1 to 9 (with 1 being the lowest risk to children in care and 9 being the highest risk if violated) to each licensing standard for all three facility types.

These weights could be used by the Department and its partners to use a risk factor for numerous purposes. We will continue discussions with the Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD), the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) to investigate the potential for the weighted violations to support ExceleRate, the state’s voluntary quality rating system for child care providers. Other uses could provide additional information to parents and the public to assist with making childcare decisions, or as a framework for fines (other states have utilized fines and fees; however, they are not currently under consideration in Illinois).

The Key Indicator Project became operational statewide as of July 1, 2016. The principle behind Key Indicators is based on years of research by internationally-recognized expert Dr. Richard Fiene and his colleagues. Key Indicator programs are utilized by several other states, as well. Illinois provided NARA four years (2010 through 2013) of violation data on licensed facilities, from which NARA was able to extrapolate a list of licensing standards, by facility type, that indicate quality or success in licensure. These key indicators are those licensing standards which have been identified as being in compliance by high-functioning licensees and out of compliance by more challenged licensees. Illinois was honored to have Dr. Fiene himself provide guidance and consultation on not only the data-gathering process but our procedures as well.

Along with an additional set of high-risk “non-negotiable” standards which must be reviewed at every visit (capacity, background clearances, pool safety, etc.) and two random standards which are changed at intervals, the key indicators create a differential monitoring system which allows Licensing Representatives to focus more time on challenging licensees and consultation.

Providers are pre-screened with stringent eligibility criteria which, when applied, disqualifies those licensees with a history of high-risk or numerous violations, prior enforcement action, and/or failed correction plans, among others. If the qualifying licensee is in compliance with the standards reviewed during the Key Indicators annual monitoring, the visit is complete. The licensing representative is free to move to the next visit. Lack of compliance on a specified number of standards will “flip” the provider to a full annual review.

There is no additional penalty to the licensee for violating any of the key indicators and correction plans are developed for any and all violations, just as they would be for regular annual monitoring. There is also no penalty for facilities to not qualify for a key indicator-type annual monitoring—providers who do not meet eligibility criteria are subject to annual unannounced monitoring which observes their compliance on a number of licensing standards, both general, and specific to their own compliance history.

The fifth full year of using the Key Indicators to enhance annual unannounced monitoring provided fewer challenges for licensing representatives and supervisors alike. Eligibility for key indicator monitoring remains between 45 and 50% of licensees. Supervisors agreed that the screening process for eligibility works well. The most common reason for being ineligible continues to be a newer provider with no previous renewal of their license.

Moving from a key indicator monitoring to a regular “full” monitoring because of cited violations remains fairly low—10 to 15 percent, depending upon facility type, with homes being more frequent to “flip” than centers. None of the licensees receiving a key indicator visit have been the subject of enforcement action. No region reports experiencing an increased number of complaints due to the abbreviated monitoring and none report increases in number or seriousness of violations at renewal after receiving key indicator annual monitoring.

Comments from users and supervisors indicate that overall, it reduces the time in the facility, especially in homes. The amount of reduction, however, varies between staff and facility type. Some report as much as 30-90-minute reductions in visit time, some report more or less, and some report no reduction especially if the visit must “flip” and the licensing representative must then conduct a more comprehensive “full” annual monitoring visit. Overall, centers report the most significant reductions, averaging between 45 to 60 minutes.

Key Indicators monitoring has been built into the mobile monitoring application, in that pre-set forms specific to each of the three facility types can be used whenever a key indicator monitoring is warranted. These forms are designed with the key indicator and non-negotiable standards pre-set, providing the functionality to select two “random’ standards to prevent predictability, and once the limit of violations has been reached, generate a warning to the licensing rep that it is time to move to a full annual.

**H. Percentage of complaints dispositioned within 30 days**

Complaints on licensed facilities are either “concurrent,” which means there are allegations of abuse or neglect reports being investigated by the Division of Child Protection and the Licensing Division is also conducting investigations on violations of licensing standards. Then there are “licensing-only” complaint investigations which involve only allegations of the violation of one or more of the licensing standards and are investigated only by Day Care Licensing Representatives. The third type of complaint investigated by the Department involves allegations that a facility is operating without a license in violation of the Child Care Act.

Complaints can be made to the Department in many ways—mail, e-mail, phone, fax, in-person, and will be taken with the complainant identified or anonymous. Upon receipt, they are assigned to a licensing representative to investigate. Usually the same licensing representative who is assigned supervision of the license will be the representative assigned to the complaint investigation due to their familiarity with the facility, staff, and licensee’s history such as knowledge of any prior issues or repeat violations of a similar nature.

**Number of complaints, per type, per quarter in FY 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | **FY 2021** |
| **Licensing Only** | 90 | 89 | 84 | 160 | **423** |
| **Concurrent** | 100 | 111 | 138 | 180 | **529** |
| **Unlicensed** | 44 | 32 | 25 | 45 | **146** |
| **Total** | **234** | **232** | **247** | **385** | **1098** |

Per rule, Licensing Representatives must complete the investigation within 30 days and make a determination whether the allegation is substantiated or not. This timeframe is self-imposed and not driven by any statute. Representatives are allowed an additional 30-day extension with supervisor approval. Most licensing-only complaints are completed within the 30-60-day range.

If the complaint is a concurrent investigation, the licensing representative is prohibited by DCFS Rule 383 from completing their licensing investigation until the Child Protective Investigator’s (CPI) recommendation has received with a final finding. If the CPI’s final finding is to indicate on child abuse or neglect allegations, citing additional licensing violations may be warranted. So, a pending child protection investigation can also cause Licensing’s own complaint investigation to be delayed beyond the initial 30-60 days. This delay and wait insures Day Care Licensing has full and complete information upon which to substantiate or unfound any licensing violations arising from the incident.

**Percentage of Complaints Dispositioned within 30 days**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Total |
| **Licensing only** | 80% | 40% | 62% | 55% | 59% |
| **Concurrent** | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| **Unlicensed** | 25% | 44% | 72% | 45% | 45% |
| **Total** | 35% | 23% | 28% | 30% | 29% |

The number of complaints, both licensing only and concurrent, appears to have steadied. There is no dramatic difference between FY 21 (1098), FY 20 (1126) and FY 19 (1305) however these numbers remain higher than FY 17 (803). The difference from FY21 & FY 20 is 28. This differential could also be contributed by the pandemic. Anecdotal comments from supervisors remain that complaints are received more and more through social media and that sometimes one social media post will generate multiple complaints on the same facility. For concurrent investigations, the impact of the heavy workload of the Division of Child Protection to arrive at a final finding is clearly visible—accounting for100% of the concurrent investigations which could not be completed within 30 days of the initiation of the complaint. The Division of Child protection again was/is heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic suffering a staffing crisis as well as heighten abuse and neglect investigations.

During the COVID-19 pandemic licensing only investigations related to health and safety concerns continued to be executed by licensing and all concurrent investigations continued to be led by the Department of Child Protection.

**I. Average number of days a Day care center applicant must wait to attend a licensing orientation.**

Orientation prior to submission of an application is voluntary. There is no requirement to attend an orientation session prior to applying for a license. However, orientation attendance is strongly encouraged as it is widely believed that attending orientation results in better-prepared, more engaged applicants. It also serves to provide a “connection” with DCFS licensing staff so that applicants have a point of contact to call or e-mail with questions about completing their application before it is even assigned to a licensing representative for processing.

Applicants expressing interest in licensure wait no more than thirty days for center orientation since depending upon the number of inquiries or interest, group orientation sessions are held monthly by each team. If there is not enough interest from the community to warrant a monthly group session, orientations are arranged on a one-on-one basis at a mutually agreed-upon time convenient to both the inquirer and the assigned representative. For many teams, this is the only method used for day care center applicants, especially in rural areas where there is not enough interest to warrant a monthly group session. Because each center is different, individual sessions are believed to be more helpful and provide more targeted information to the proposed facility than broader group sessions.

In metropolitan areas, larger group orientations are often held monthly. Orientations for centers follow a statewide, standardized PowerPoint presentation. This is to ensure that all inquirers receive the same basic information regarding application for licensure, information on rules and regulations, other agencies with which interaction will be necessary, and suggestions for the operation of a successful center.

Day Care Home Orientation has no real wait time and continues to be offered on-line via a web-based orientation, available 24 hours a day. Participants can schedule their own time and may stop and start again later if need be. Although not mandatory to receive a license, completion of any orientation will result in the participant receiving a certificate worth two hours of pre-service training credit, which can be used toward the mandatory 15 hours of pre-service training required prior to application for a day care home or group day care home license.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, group orientation could no longer be held at any location in person. However, staff are conducting one on one orientations as requested via mobile devices, virtually and in person.

**J. Number of licensing orientation sessions available in the past year (in-person groups, virtual)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group Orientation** | **DCH** | **GCH** | **DCC** | **Total** |
| **Quarter 1** | 43 | 3 | 49 | 95 |
| **Quarter 2** | 29 | 5 | 31 | 65 |
| **Quarter 3** | 19 | 8 | 30 | 57 |
| **Quarter 4** | 8 | 7 | 33 | 48 |
| **FY 2021 Totals** | **99** | **23** | **143** | **265** |

**K. Number of Department Trainings related to licensing and child development available to providers this past year.**

According to the DCFS Office of Workforce Development, in FY 2021, the Department provided online Mandated Reporter Training free of charge to 107 New child care professionals. Since its inception, over 759,712 individuals throughout the state have participated in the Mandated Reporter Training on-line. The training is not limited strictly to licensed child care providers, but for school teachers, Head Start staff, Pre-K, Preschool for All, and other Early Learning educators. It is a required component of the 15 hours of mandatory pre-service training prior to the application for a DCFS-licensed day care or group day care home or for employment in a DCFS-licensed child care facility.

In addition to the Mandated Reporter Training, DCFS Online Day Care Home Orientation was initiated by 3,506 users during FY 2021. Of those that started the Orientation, 55% proceeded from the eligibility questionnaire to the actual training and 1,915 completed the orientation. Users from Illinois and 28 other states or territories have taken advantage of the on-line orientation when deciding to pursue in-home day care licensure, despite it being relevant to only Illinois day care home applicants.

DCFS held trainings on the Restore Illinois License Day Care Guidance and License Exempt School-Age Guidance. All staff have participated in LeadCare Illinois lead safety training, Safe Sleep Practice Training. Emergency Rules changes that were added to 407 Day Care Licensing Rules for Day Care Centers, 406 Day Care Homes and 408 Group Day Care Home Rules that were implemented with all Day Care Licensing staff as well as conducted an overview to the Child Care Resource & Referral staff and a number of providers.

DCFS continues to work closely with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), the umbrella agency for the sixteen local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Not only is their staff involved in various workgroups, one Regional Administrator is Co-Chair of the Day Care Statewide Licensing Advisory Council’s Training Subcommittee. INCCRRA has also been a valuable source of information on available trainings, especially those related to the CCDBG-required increases in pre-service training. Current initiatives with INCCRRA and Gateways are: a process to use the Gateways Professional Development as a tool to support transcript review to insure more accurate qualifications of day care center employees, support providers in accessing the IDHS-required training for CCAP providers, and work on recommendations for aligning day care licensing standards and Gateways Early Childhood Credentials.

INCCRRA also, though routine webinars, has worked diligently to keep DCFS Day Care Licensing staff updated on the latest news about ExceleRate, the state’s voluntary quality ratings system for child care providers. A licensee’s participation in this voluntary system of Bronze, Silver, and Gold ratings is encouraged and supported by DCFS. The issuance of a DCFS day care facility license grants the licensee automatic “green” rating status. INCCRRA also provides a DCLR portal to the Gateways Training Registry so that member DCLRS can access training information on licensees and their staff to insure compliance with licensing standards.

In late 2016, Day Care Licensing began conducting bi-annual “Provider Forums.” These forums are held during the same week in multiple, rotating locations in each of the four regions, using the same agenda and PowerPoint presentation. The purpose of the Forums is to provide news on Rule amendments, other timely information, and answers to any local questions. Forums are held separately for day care home licensees and Day care center directors and staff. The first round was held in October 2016 with additional Forums in 2017, March 2018, October 2018, March 2019 and October 2019. We are extremely appreciative of the support and assistance that our community partners have provided—everything from handouts, guest speakers, even assistance with securing venues large enough to hold all the attendees. Judging from participant survey responses, these Forums are viewed as valuable, informative, and worth continuing. The next round of forums was scheduled for March of 2020 however due to the COVID pandemic this session had to be cancelled. We are anticipating the organization of a virtual forum in the upcoming months.

**SECTION 5; EFFORTS TO COORDINATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CREDENTIALING ISSUES, AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING TRAINING REGSITRY, AND QUALITY RATINGS AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS (QRIS)**

The Department continues to work closely with its community partners and agencies such as IDHS, ISBE, etc. The CCDBG reauthorization has been a prime example, as agencies worked together to ensure that Illinois application was accepted and then to ensure that the structures to support and implement necessary changes were in place. Many staff from IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA, GOECD, IDPH, Head Start, etc., participate in various workgroups and committees devoted to licensing issues, such as training and professional development, Key Indicators and Weighted Violations, Statewide Emergency Preparation and Response, etc.

Department Licensing and the Division of Program Practice is also involved in the Inter-Agency Team (IAT), which meets monthly to share information, coordinate practice, and insure cooperation. This group was heavily involved with coordinating the planning and then implementation of the tasks involved in CCDB Reauthorization and is currently working to help coordinate statewide efforts with Public Act 100-0105 which prohibits the expulsion or suspension of children from day care or early learning facilities due to challenging behaviors.

The work of the Statewide Day Care Licensing Advisory Council and its five subcommittees has continued this year. The Advisory Council contains four subcommittees: Data, Communications, Training, and Systems Integration and Policy & Rules. All have been working diligently to meet goals set forth in strategic planning as well as to address newly-identified challenges or tasks. This Council contains a robust mix of child care and early learning partners from across the state, in addition to DCFS licensing staff and management, and has been successful in addressing such issues as provider immunizations, improving use of data, increasing effective communication with our providers, identifying training needs and opportunities, DCFS form translations, and working to develop language for proposed day care Rule amendments, etc.

DCFS management staff and licensing representatives also continue to serve as members of workgroups and subcommittees that cross all manner of early childhood platforms, from Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) to statewide Emergency Preparation and Response committee, Early Learning Council, Statewide Quality Ratings Technical Assistance Team, Interagency Committee, and many others.

* Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD): DCFS and OECD staff work closely on such projects as Preschool Expulsion and Suspension prevention, Workforce Development issues, Credentialing and alignment of qualifications across various early learning platforms, and other issues. Their generosity in securing Race-to-the-Top funds for Licensing made several technological advances and the Key Indicators/Weighted Violations system possible. Their support and encouragement have been crucial in the many improvements to Day Care Licensing these past few years, including improved communication with our licensees and streamlining monitoring practices.
* Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM): DCFS works with the OSFM to coordinate OSFM fire safety inspection of some day care homes and all-day care centers. OSFM reports that they are short staffed, and Fire Inspections may take longer wait time to schedule.
* Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA): DCFS partners frequently with INCCRRA and is dependent upon them for the Gateways to Opportunity Registry, pre- and in-service training for applicants and licensees and their staff, delivery and oversight of the Child Care Subsidy program via the 16 local R&Rs, and much more. Presently, the primary work with INCCRRA and Gateways revolve around transcript review and the use of the Professional Development Record, increased acceptance of credentials as means for teacher and director positions within centers and informing providers on CCAP-required trainings. INCCRRA staff are also members of the Advisory Council and its subcommittees and play a significant role in assisting the Department with coordinating sites for bi-annual Provider Forums.
* Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH): DCFS has worked with IDPH staff in previous years on provider and employee immunizations, swimming pool safety issues, training requirements for food handlers, influenza and other disease outbreaks, etc. IDPH, as well as the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, has been a major source of support and guidance in drafting the required Rule changes and policies focusing on mandatory water testing of all homes and centers built before 1-1-2000.
* Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE): Legislation regarding the exemption of school-age-only child care facilities and Adult and Child Care Food Program nutritional guidelines have two been areas of cooperative work between DCFS and ISBE this past year. The most significant work, this year has been surrounding the required rule-making between our two agencies to insure compliance with Public Act 100-0105, the Preschool Suspension and Expulsion prevention.
* Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS): Day Care Licensing works extremely closely with IDHS regarding CCDBG requirements and implementation, background checks for license-exempt providers, Child Care Assistance program (CCAP, aka: subsidy), federal audits, Head Start, exemption status determinations and unlicensed facilities, statewide Emergency Planning and Response, etc.

A major accomplishment between our two agencies this year has been the on-going work on the protocol for those facilities requesting documentation of their exempt status to support their application for CCAP funding, specifically facilities now exempt under Child Care Act Section 2.09 (j) for school-age only programs.

**Impact of CCDBG Reauthorization**

The impact of the federal Child Care Development Block Grant reauthorization (CCDBG) has had significant consequences for day care licensing. Rule changes remain pending to consider aligning all licensees with the CCDBG requirements for pre-service training to cover the original ten specific health and safety topics (of which 3 are already rule provisions), to provide a 90-day grace-period for submission of medical examination reports by identified homeless children enrolling in licensed facilities, and to increase the scope of background checks.

As discussed previously, CCDBG reauthorization has demanded significant shift in childcare-related background check processing by the Department. Prior to the change, DCFS requested FBI checks only for individuals who had “hits” (identified criminal history) in Illinois and/or whom lived outside of Illinois in the past five years. CCDBG mandated the costly additional step of FBI checks for ALL adults tied to a day care license. DCFS implemented this requirement in July 1, 2016, in an effort to spread out the impact and continues to work towards the goal of updating all clearances for every licensee, adult household member, or employee of a licensed facility. The additional work has strained resources in the Department’s Background Check Unit and caused delays, which are being addressed by temporarily increasing background clearance unit staff.

**Technology Upgrades for Day Care Licensing**

1. *Online Application*

The online application project, which was slated to begin for day care during this fiscal year, was tabled due to the Department’s adoption of the coming CCWIS (Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System). This system will significantly change and improve information and data technology for the Department. Expending existing resources on modifying the current system, which will become obsolete soon, was thought to be inappropriate.

1. *Hand-Held Devices and Mobile Monitoring Software Application*

In mid-2016, the Department entered into a contract with TCC Inc., of Indianapolis, Indiana to develop a mobile monitoring application to use on the HP ProX-2 tablets that were purchased in 2015 for day care licensing representatives and supervisors through Race-To-The-Top funds. This software allows for significant reductions in pre-visit preparation, data entry by clerical, and costly follow-up mailings. In December 2017, a cadre of “Super Users” were trained and have been testing the application and data exchanges between TCC and DCFS. At present, we are implementing the statewide rollout and have begun planning minor system enhancements. The “tap and go” design will allow DCLRS to pick and choose any or all of the licensing standards to be reviewed, will be able to host the pre-set list of Key Indicators, and will allow enhanced use of tablet features, such as signature capability. It will also automatically upload some information to the IMSA computer system, thus reducing data-entry by Licensing clerical. It is a huge step in enhancing our work in the field and embracing technology.

1. *Update of the DCFS Sunshine Website page*

In addition to the Key Indicators/Weighted Violations and mobile monitoring enhancements, the Office of Early Childhood Development graciously provided additional Race-to-the-Top funding for improvements to the DCFS Day Care Licensing page of the Illinois Sunshine Project website. Initially this page provided only a look-up feature for viewing licensed providers’ cited violations. The project, which was completed in late September 2016, insures that Department meets its reporting obligations for violations, monitoring, data on injuries, fatalities and indicated abuse/neglect reports in licensed facilities, and provides child care resources, news and information for providers, parents and the public alike. The website can be found at the address below.

<https://sunshine.dcfs.illinois.gov/Content/Help/News.aspx>

In 2018, legislation passed which required the Department to add additional information to the DCFS Sunshine provider look-up feature. Now the feature will additionally identify not just active licensees, but those licensees who have surrendered their licenses with cause, have had their license revoked, refused renewal, or who have surrendered their licenses while under investigation.

Sunshine site suggested changes and additional information to provide even more resources to our providers and their consumers have been made and enhancements are continually being made. These recommendations will be reviewed ongoingly at the end of each year and requests for change or additions will be made accordingly through our Office of Communications.

**Day Care Licensing Representative I & II**

***Current Education & Experience Qualifying Criteria***

**DCLR I & II Class Specification Education Requirements:**

* Requires Bachelor’s Degree from accredited college/university with specialization in early childhood education or child development.

**DCLR Educational Pathways:**

* DCLR I / II applicants can meet the class specification education requirement by means of any of the following five pathways:
1. Bachelor’s degree with a specialization in Early Childhood Education or Child Development;
2. Bachelor’s degree with declared major in Social Work or Human Services field (which consists of Early Childhood Development, Human Services Administration,, Psychiatry, Social Science, Guidance & Counseling, Human Services, Pastoral Counseling, Psychology, Social Services, Home Economics - Child & Family Services, Master of Divinity, Psychiatric Nursing, Public Administration, Sociology, Therapeutic Recreation, Child, Family and Community Services, Human Development Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, Mental Health Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling) **plus** 18 semester hours of directly related coursework;
3. Bachelor’s degree with declared major in non-human services field **plus** 20 semester hours in directly related coursework **and** 2 years full-time experience in programs for children from birth to eight years of age;
4. Bachelor’s degree in any field **plus** valid IL teaching license **plus** 1 year teaching in programs for children from birth through Grade 3 or 2 years working in programs for children from birth to 8 years of age;
5. Master’s degree with declared major in Early Childhood Education or Child Development.
* Directly related coursework (referred to in Pathways (2) and (3)) is presented below.
**Note**: Only this coursework is considered and as directly related experience and the coursework is strictly interpreted via a review of official college transcripts.
* Child Care
* Child Care Center/Early Childhood Administration
* Child Development
* Child Psychology
* Childhood Education
* Children’s Literature
* Communications Techniques (geared towards serving children)
* Creative Dramatics
* Cultural Diversity (in programs for children)
* Curriculum Development/Early Childhood Programs
* Development Psychology
* Development Through Play
* Early Childhood Education
* Educational Psychology
* Effective Teaching Methods for Young Children
* Exceptional Child
* First Aid & Safety
* Health & Nutrition
* Home Day Care Management
* Human Behavior and Social Environment
* Toddler Care
* Interpersonal/Intergroup Relationships
* Legislation & Public Policy (services geared towards children & families)
* Management/Supervision/Staff Development
* Math & Science for the Young Child
* Methods of Instruction at the Pre-Primary Level
* Parenting
* Pediatric Nursing
* Recreation of School Age
* Screening, Assessment & Evaluation of Young Child
* School Age-Programming
* Theory of Learning

Any course with one or more of the following in the title (or content description):

* Piaget
* Erickson
* Montessori
* Vygotsky
* Regio Emilia

**DCLR I & II Class Specification Experience Requirements:**

* DCLR I: Requires one year professional experience in early childhood, day care center or kindergarten or field related to day care licensing.
* DCLR II: Requires two years professional experience in early childhood, day care center, kindergarten, or day care licensing program.

**DCLR Experience Pathways:**

* DCLR I / II applicants can meet the class specification experience requirement (DCLR I = 1 year experience; DCLR II = 2 years’ experience) by means of any of the following six pathways:
1. Day Care Licensing Representative (only if employed by Illinois DCFS);
2. Day Care/Early Childhood Teacher (only those positions responsible for developing/implementing educational, activity, or infant stimulation programs – experience gained after receiving a Bachelor’s degree);
3. Early Childhood Associate Teacher/Child Care Worker (responsible for developing/implementing educational, activity or infant stimulation programs – experience gained if applicant has completed at least 2 years of college);
4. Teacher in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or Grades 1-3;
5. Day Care Center Director (must report supervision of a minimum of 5 full-time or 10 part-time employees in a center with a minimum enrollment of 15 children; experience only credited if applicant has completed at least 2 years of college);
6. Graduate Internship/practicum from semi-related Master’s program which was completed in an environment which provided educational and activity programs for young children (examples – Head Start, School District, Day Care Center, etc.) Master’s degree considered semi-related would be those listed as related human services fields presented in Item 2 under **DCLR Educational Pathways** on the previous page).
* Credit is assigned for the following types of experience at a maximum of 1 year:
* Child Welfare Associate Specialist
* Child Welfare Specialist
* Child Protection Associate Specialist
* Child Protection Specialist

Prepared by: CMS Division of Examining & Counseling (8.28.2013)



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| **FFY 2017**  | **QE 12-31-16** | **QE 3-31-17** | **QE 6-30-17** | **QE 9-30-17** | **FFY 2017** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing |  7,030,915  |  6,621,763  |  7,145,295  |  6,721,032  |  27,519,004  |
|   | Background Checks |  158,762  |  123,550  |  160,117  |  156,840  |  599,269  |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  6,872,153  |  6,498,213  |  6,985,177  |  6,564,192  |  26,919,735  |
| Allocation Percentage | 62.53% | 62.33% | 63.08% | 62.79% | 62.68% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **4,297,278**  |  **4,050,340**  |  **4,406,314**  |  **4,121,341**  |  **16,875,272**  |
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| **FFY 2018** | **QE 12-31-17** | **QE 3-31-18** | **QE 6-30-18** | **QE 9-30-18** | **FFY 2018** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing |  6,142,207  |  6,783,442  |  6,931,481  |  6,291,704  |  26,148,833  |
|   | Background Checks |  168,712  |  164,063  |  173,971  |  201,597  |  708,343  |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  5,973,495  |  6,619,379  |  6,757,510  |  6,090,107  |  25,440,490  |
| Allocation Percentage | 62.54% | 62.68% | 63.11% | 62.44% | 62.69% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **3,735,835**  |  **4,148,808**  |  **4,264,441**  |  **3,802,940**  |  **15,952,024**  |
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| **FFY 2019** | **QE 12-31-18** | **QE 3-31-19** | **QE 6-30-19** | **QE 9-30-19** | **FFY 2019** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing |  6,930,925  |  6,820,056  |  7,164,541  |  6,648,627  |  27,564,149  |
|   | Background Checks |  133,156  |  148,659  |  163,170  |  140,558  |  585,543  |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  6,797,769  |  6,671,397  |  7,001,371  |  6,508,069  |  26,978,606  |
| Allocation Percentage | 61.77% | 61.67% | 63.22% | 63.53% | 62.55% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **4,199,067**  |  **4,114,553**  |  **4,426,057**  |  **4,134,860**  |  **16,874,537**  |
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| **FFY 2020** | **QE 12-31-19** | **QE 3-31-20** | **QE 6-30-20** | **QE 9-30-20** | **FFY 2020** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing |  6,957,633  |  7,049,643  |  6,923,479  |  6,897,975  |  27,828,730  |
|   | Background Checks |  179,711  |  214,060  |  110,123  |  194,970  |  698,864  |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  6,777,921  |  6,835,584  |  6,813,357  |  6,703,005  |  27,129,866  |
| Allocation Percentage | 64.76% | 64.54% | 63.54% | 63.57% | 64.10% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **4,389,465**  |  **4,411,719**  |  **4,329,137**  |  **4,260,947**  |  **17,391,267**  |
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| **FFY 2021** | **QE 12-31-20** | **QE 3-31-21** | **QE 6-30-21** | **QE 9-30-21** | **FFY 2021** |
| DCFS Day Care Licensing Expenditures  | DHS Claim Day Care Licensing |  6,717,081  |  6,388,558  |   6,747,942  |   |   19,853,581  |
|   | Background Checks |  198,817  |  188,623  |   176,579  |   |   564,019  |
|   | Adjusted Day Care Licensing |  6,518,264  |  6,199,935  |   6,571,363  |  -  |   19,289,562  |
| Allocation Percentage | 62.72% | 64.51% |  62.25% |   | 63.16% |
| Total CCDF Claim |  **4,088,308**  |  **3,999,378**  |  **4,090,621**  |  **-**  |  **12,178,308**  |

DCFS Day care Licensing Division would like to express our gratitude to the Governor’s office for their support and guidance, especially throughout this pandemic period, the leadership, vision and support of our Director Mark Smith, Chief of staff Jassen Strokosch, Office of Legislative affairs and Chief Legislative Liaison Meaghan Jorgensen, our legal staff and many legislators for their feedback and support. We, the Day care licensing leadership team genuinely appreciate all the support, guidance and direction.