



General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**Raised Bill No. 6558**

LCO No. 4276



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 19a-87b of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

3 (a) No person, group of persons, association, organization,  
4 corporation, institution or agency, public or private, shall maintain a  
5 family child care home, as [defined] described in section 19a-77, without  
6 a license issued by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Licensure  
7 forms shall be obtained from the Office of Early Childhood.  
8 Applications for licensure shall be made to the commissioner on forms  
9 provided by the office and shall contain the information required by  
10 regulations adopted under this section. The licensure and application  
11 forms shall contain a notice that false statements made therein are  
12 punishable in accordance with section 53a-157b. Applicants shall state,  
13 in writing, that they are in compliance with the regulations adopted by  
14 the commissioner pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. Before a  
15 family child care home license is granted, the office shall make an

16 inquiry and investigation which shall include a visit and inspection of  
17 the premises for which the license is requested. Any inspection  
18 conducted by the office shall include an inspection for evident sources  
19 of lead poisoning. The office shall provide for a chemical analysis of any  
20 paint chips found on such premises. Neither the commissioner nor the  
21 commissioner's designee shall require an annual inspection for homes  
22 seeking license renewal or for licensed homes, except that the  
23 commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall make an  
24 unannounced visit, inspection or investigation of each licensed family  
25 child care home at least once every year. A licensed family child care  
26 home shall not be subject to any conditions on the operation of such  
27 home by local officials, other than those imposed by the office pursuant  
28 to this subsection, if the home complies with all local codes and  
29 ordinances applicable to single and multifamily dwellings.

30 (b) No person shall act as an assistant or substitute staff member to a  
31 person or entity maintaining a family child care home, as defined in  
32 section 19a-77, without an approval issued by the commissioner. Any  
33 person seeking to act as an assistant or substitute staff member in a  
34 family child care home shall submit an application for such approval to  
35 the office. Applications for approval shall: (1) Be made to the  
36 commissioner on forms provided by the office, (2) contain the  
37 information required by regulations adopted under this section, and (3)  
38 be accompanied by a fee of fifteen dollars. The approval application  
39 forms shall contain a notice that false statements made in such form are  
40 punishable in accordance with section 53a-157b.

41 (c) The commissioner, within available appropriations, shall require  
42 each initial applicant or prospective employee of a family child care  
43 home in a position requiring the provision of care to a child, including  
44 an assistant or substitute staff member and each household member  
45 who is sixteen years of age or older, to submit to comprehensive  
46 background checks, including state and national criminal history  
47 records checks. The criminal history records checks required pursuant  
48 to this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with section 29-17a.  
49 The commissioner shall also request a check of the state child abuse

50 registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k. The commissioner  
51 shall notify each licensee of the provisions of this subsection. For  
52 purposes of this subsection, "household member" means any person,  
53 other than the person who is licensed to conduct, operate or maintain a  
54 family child care home, who resides in the family child care home, such  
55 as the licensee's spouse or children, tenants and any other occupant.

56 (d) An application for initial licensure pursuant to this section shall  
57 be accompanied by a fee of forty dollars and such license shall be issued  
58 for a term of four years. An application for renewal of a license issued  
59 pursuant to this section shall be accompanied by a fee of forty dollars  
60 and a certification from the licensee that any child enrolled in the family  
61 child care home has received age-appropriate immunizations in  
62 accordance with regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (f) of this  
63 section. A license issued pursuant to this section shall be renewed for a  
64 term of four years. In the case of an applicant submitting an application  
65 for renewal of a license that has expired, and who has ceased operations  
66 of a family child care home due to such expired license, the  
67 commissioner may renew such expired license within thirty days of the  
68 date of such expiration upon receipt of an application for renewal that  
69 is accompanied by such fee and such certification.

70 (e) An application for initial staff approval or renewal of staff  
71 approval shall be accompanied by a fee of fifteen dollars. Such  
72 approvals shall be issued or renewed for a term of two years.

73 (f) The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the  
74 provisions of chapter 54, to ~~[assure]~~ ensure that family child care homes,  
75 as ~~[defined]~~ described in section 19a-77, meet the health, educational  
76 and social needs of children utilizing such homes. Such regulations shall  
77 ensure that the family child care home is treated as a residence, and not  
78 an institutional facility. Such regulations shall specify that each child be  
79 protected as age-appropriate by adequate immunization against  
80 diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella,  
81 hemophilus influenzae type B and any other vaccine required by the  
82 schedule of active immunization adopted pursuant to section 19a-7f.

83 Such regulations shall provide appropriate exemptions for children for  
84 whom such immunization is medically contraindicated and for children  
85 whose parents or guardian objects to such immunization on religious  
86 grounds and require that any such objection be accompanied by a  
87 statement from such parents or guardian that such immunization would  
88 be contrary to the religious beliefs of such child or the parents or  
89 guardian of such child, which statement shall be acknowledged, in  
90 accordance with the provisions of sections 1-32, 1-34 and 1-35, by (1) a  
91 judge of a court of record or a family support magistrate, (2) a clerk or  
92 deputy clerk of a court having a seal, (3) a town clerk, (4) a notary public,  
93 (5) a justice of the peace, or (6) an attorney admitted to the bar of this  
94 state. Such regulations shall also specify conditions under which family  
95 child care home providers may administer tests to monitor glucose  
96 levels in a child with diagnosed diabetes mellitus, and administer  
97 medicinal preparations, including controlled drugs specified in the  
98 regulations by the commissioner, to a child receiving child care services  
99 at a family child care home pursuant to a written order of a physician  
100 licensed to practice medicine in this or another state, an advanced  
101 practice registered nurse licensed to prescribe in accordance with  
102 section 20-94a or a physician assistant licensed to prescribe in  
103 accordance with section 20-12d, and the written authorization of a  
104 parent or guardian of such child. Such regulations shall specify  
105 appropriate standards for extended care and intermittent short-term  
106 overnight care. The commissioner shall inform each licensee, by way of  
107 a plain language summary provided not later than sixty days after the  
108 regulation's effective date, of any new or changed regulations adopted  
109 under this subsection with which a licensee must comply.

110 (g) Upon the declaration by the Governor of a civil preparedness  
111 emergency pursuant to section 28-9 or a public health emergency  
112 pursuant to section 19a-131a, the commissioner may waive the  
113 provisions of any regulation adopted pursuant to this section if the  
114 commissioner determines that such waiver would not endanger the life,  
115 safety or health of any child. The commissioner shall prescribe the  
116 duration of such waiver, provided such waiver shall not extend beyond

117 the duration of the declared emergency. The commissioner shall  
118 establish the criteria by which a waiver request shall be made and the  
119 conditions for which a waiver will be granted or denied. The provisions  
120 of section 19a-84 shall not apply to a denial of a waiver request under  
121 this subsection.

122 (h) Any family child care home may provide child care services to  
123 homeless children and youths, as defined in 42 USC 11434a, as amended  
124 from time to time, for a period not to exceed ninety days without  
125 complying with any provision in regulations adopted pursuant to this  
126 section relating to immunization and physical examination  
127 requirements. Any family child care home that provides child care  
128 services to homeless children and youths at such home under this  
129 subsection shall maintain a record on file of all homeless children and  
130 youths who have attended such home for a period of two years after  
131 such homeless children or youths are no longer receiving child care  
132 services at such home.

133 (i) Any family child care home may provide child care services to a  
134 foster child for a period not to exceed forty-five days without complying  
135 with any provision in regulations adopted pursuant to this section  
136 relating to immunization and physical examination requirements. Any  
137 family child care home that provides child care services to a foster child  
138 at such home under this subsection shall maintain a record on file of  
139 such foster child for a period of two years after such foster child is no  
140 longer receiving child care services at such home. For purposes of this  
141 subsection, "foster child" means a child who is in the care and custody  
142 of the Commissioner of Children and Families and placed in a foster  
143 home licensed pursuant to section 17a-114, foster home approved by a  
144 child-placing agency licensed pursuant to section 17a-149, facility  
145 licensed pursuant to section 17a-145 or with a relative or fictive kin  
146 caregiver pursuant to section 17a-114.

147 (j) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2026, inclusive,  
148 the Commissioner of Early Childhood may issue a license to maintain a  
149 family child care home in the cities of New Britain, New Haven,

150 Bridgeport, Stamford or Hartford in accordance with the provisions of  
151 this chapter to a person or group of persons who have partnered with  
152 an association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, public  
153 or private, to provide child care services in a space within a facility,  
154 other than a private family home and that has been approved by the  
155 commissioner, that has been provided by such association,  
156 organization, corporation, institution or agency. The commissioner shall  
157 not approve more than one facility in each such city to be used for  
158 licenses issued under this subsection. An application for a license under  
159 this subsection shall include a copy of the current fire marshal certificate  
160 of compliance with the Fire Safety Code, and written verification of  
161 compliance with the State Building Code, local zoning and building  
162 requirements and local health ordinances. The commissioner may  
163 require an applicant for a license under this subsection to comply with  
164 additional conditions relating to the health and safety of the children  
165 who will be served in such facility. The commissioner may waive any  
166 requirement that does not apply to such facility. Any license issued  
167 under this subsection shall expire on June 30, 2026, except that the  
168 commissioner may suspend or revoke any such license at any time in  
169 accordance with the provisions of section 19a-87e.

170       Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) For the fiscal year ending June  
171 30, 2022, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Office of Higher Education,  
172 in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood, shall, within  
173 available appropriations, administer an early childhood educator loan  
174 forgiveness grant program to persons who meet the eligibility  
175 requirements described in subsection (c) of this section.

176       (b) The program shall provide a student loan forgiveness grant to any  
177 person (1) who has been continuously employed by a licensed child care  
178 center, group child care home or family child care home, as described in  
179 section 19a-77 of the general statutes, for at least four years at the time  
180 of application, (2) whose annual salary at such licensed child care center  
181 is less than fifty thousand dollars per year, and (3) who holds (A) an  
182 associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from  
183 a public institution of higher education in the state that is regionally

184 accredited, provided such associate degree program is approved by (i)  
185 the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher  
186 Education, and (ii) the Office of Early Childhood, or (B) a bachelor's  
187 degree with a concentration in early childhood education from a public  
188 institution of higher education in the state that is regionally accredited,  
189 provided such bachelor's degree program is approved by (i) the Board  
190 of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education, and  
191 (ii) the Office of Early Childhood. As used in this subsection,  
192 "concentration in early childhood education" has the same meaning as  
193 provided in section 10-16p of the general statutes.

194 (c) Any person who satisfies the eligibility requirements prescribed  
195 in subsection (b) of this section shall receive a grant in an amount equal  
196 to the remaining balance of such person's federal or state educational  
197 loans.

198 (d) Persons may apply to the Office of Higher Education for grants  
199 under this section at such time and in such manner as the executive  
200 director of the Office of Higher Education prescribes.

201 (e) Any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes of this section  
202 shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be available for  
203 expenditure during the next fiscal year.

204 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2022, and applicable to taxable years*  
205 *commencing on or after January 1, 2022*) (a) For taxable years commencing  
206 on or after January 1, 2022, there shall be allowed a credit against the tax  
207 imposed under chapter 229 of the general statutes, for any individual  
208 who (1) has been employed for at least six months during the taxable  
209 year by a child care center, group child care home or family child care  
210 home that provides child care services, as such terms are described in  
211 section 19a-77 of the general statutes, in this state with the primary  
212 responsibility for a classroom of children, and (2) has a Connecticut  
213 adjusted gross income of not more than fifty thousand dollars during  
214 each taxable year in which the credit is claimed.

215 (b) Such credit shall be in the amount of (1) five hundred dollars for

216 an individual who has been issued an early childhood teacher  
217 credential, pursuant to section 10-520b of the general statutes, (2) one  
218 thousand dollars for an individual who holds an associate degree with  
219 a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of  
220 higher education that is regionally accredited, and (3) one thousand five  
221 hundred dollars for an individual who holds at least a bachelor's degree  
222 with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of  
223 higher education that is regionally accredited, provided the  
224 requirements under subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this  
225 section are met for each taxable year in which the credit is claimed.

226 (c) If the amount of the credit allowed pursuant to this section exceeds  
227 the individual's liability for the tax imposed under chapter 229 of the  
228 general statutes, the Commissioner of Revenue Services shall treat such  
229 excess as an overpayment and, except as provided under section 12-739  
230 of the general statutes or 12-742 of the general statutes, shall refund the  
231 amount of such excess, without interest, to the individual.

232 (d) Any individual claiming a credit under this section shall provide  
233 any documentation required by the Commissioner of Revenue Services  
234 in a form and manner prescribed by said commissioner.

235 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 17b-749 of the general statutes is  
236 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
237 *2021*):

238 (a) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall establish and operate  
239 a child care subsidy program to increase the availability, affordability  
240 and quality of child care services for families with a parent or caretaker  
241 who (1) is (A) working, [or attending] (B) enrolled in (i) high school, (ii)  
242 a public or independent institution of higher education, (iii) a private  
243 occupational school authorized pursuant to sections 10a-22a to 10a-22o,  
244 inclusive, or (iv) an alternate route to certification program approved by  
245 the State Board of Education, or (C) participating in a local Even Start  
246 program or other adult education program approved by the  
247 Commissioner of Early Childhood; or (2) receives cash assistance under



248 the temporary family assistance program from the Department of Social  
249 Services and is participating in an education, training or other job  
250 preparation activity approved pursuant to subsection (b) of section 17b-  
251 688i or subsection (b) of section 17b-689d. Services available under the  
252 child care subsidy program shall include the provision of child care  
253 subsidies for children under the age of thirteen or children under the  
254 age of nineteen with special needs. The Office of Early Childhood shall  
255 open and maintain enrollment for the child care subsidy program and  
256 shall administer such program within the existing budgetary resources  
257 available. The office shall issue a notice on the office's Internet web site  
258 any time the office closes the program to new applications, changes  
259 eligibility requirements, changes program benefits or makes any other  
260 change to the program's status or terms, except the office shall not be  
261 required to issue such notice when the office expands program  
262 eligibility. Any change in the office's acceptance of new applications,  
263 eligibility requirements, program benefits or any other change to the  
264 program's status or terms for which the office is required to give notice  
265 pursuant to this subsection, shall not be effective until thirty days after  
266 the office issues such notice.

267 Sec. 5. Subsection (d) of section 17b-749 of the general statutes is  
268 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
269 *2021*):

270 (d) (1) Not later than July 1, 2015, an applicant determined to be  
271 eligible for program benefits by the Commissioner of Early Childhood  
272 shall remain eligible for such benefits for a period prescribed by federal  
273 law.

274 (2) For purposes of determining the eligibility of an applicant for  
275 program benefits under subparagraph (A) of subdivision (1) of  
276 subsection (a) of this section, the commissioner shall accept evidence of  
277 registration with a job search assistance program administered by the  
278 Labor Department. An applicant determined to be eligible for program  
279 benefits under this subdivision shall be considered employed half-time  
280 and eligible for such benefits for a period of ninety days while such

281 applicant seeks employment.

282       Sec. 6. Section 8-210 of the general statutes is amended by adding  
283 subsection (g) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

284       (NEW) (g) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2022, and June 30, 2023,  
285 the Office of Early Childhood shall permit any family that meets the  
286 eligibility requirements described in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection  
287 (a) of section 17b-749, as amended by this act, or subdivision (2) of  
288 subsection (d) of section 17b-749, as amended by this act, to participate  
289 in a program provided at a state-contracted child care center under this  
290 section.

291       Sec. 7. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) There is established a task force to  
292 analyze and make recommendations on issues relating to early  
293 childhood workforce development needs in the state.

294       (b) The task force shall examine the following: (1) How to encourage  
295 equity-based practices in early childhood education preparation and  
296 professional development; (2) ways to address inequity in access to  
297 employment opportunities and compensation in the early childhood  
298 workforce; (3) the feasibility of creating a new co-authored license that  
299 would offer multiple levels of flexibility to address the range of ages,  
300 settings and roles in the early childhood field, including a professional  
301 continuum for assistants, lead teachers, generalists and specialists, such  
302 as early interventionist, mental health, integrated special education and  
303 rehabilitation therapies; and (4) workforce demands in the state related  
304 to the need for early childhood educators providing child care services  
305 for infants and toddlers to age six or age eight.

306       (c) The task force shall make recommendations concerning: (1)  
307 Legislation for educator preparation requirements in the early  
308 childhood field; (2) the creation of a new early childhood teacher license  
309 or credential jointly issued by the Office of Early Childhood and the  
310 Department of Education; (3) the development of a unifying framework  
311 for early childhood educator preparation, in accordance with the  
312 National Association for the Education of Young Children and the

313 Council for Exceptional Children - Division of Early Childhood, in order  
314 to offer definition of levels for competencies and compensation, such as  
315 (A) professional development and alternative routes for aides or  
316 classroom assistants, (B) associate degree preparation and alternative  
317 routes for assistant teachers, (C) bachelor's degree preparation or post-  
318 baccalaureate work for head teachers, (D) bachelor's degree preparation,  
319 post-baccalaureate work or graduate degree attainment for specialists,  
320 and (E) alignment with competencies to address adult learners,  
321 experience in the field, as well as capacity in languages, community  
322 context and cultural norms; and (4) workforce development and the  
323 creation of job opportunities in early childhood.

324 (d) The task force shall consist of the following members:

325 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives  
326 who is a professor of early childhood education at a public institution of  
327 higher education in the state;

328 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate who is  
329 a faculty member from a community college;

330 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
331 Representatives who is a representative from the Capitol Region  
332 Education Council;

333 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate who is an  
334 employee of a child care center, group child care home or family child  
335 care home;

336 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
337 Representatives who is a representative from the Connecticut Early  
338 Childhood Alliance;

339 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who is a  
340 representative from a state or national early childhood accrediting  
341 organization;

342 (7) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the commissioner's

343 designee;

344 (8) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

345 (9) The co-chairs of the Connecticut Consortium for the Advancement  
346 of Early Childhood Educators; and

347 (10) The executive director of the State Education Resource Center, or  
348 the executive director's designee.

349 (e) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
350 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (d) of this section may be a member  
351 of the General Assembly.

352 (f) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
353 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
354 be filled by the appointing authority.

355 (g) The appointments of the speaker of the House of Representatives  
356 and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall serve as the  
357 chairpersons of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first  
358 meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days  
359 after the effective date of this section.

360 (h) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
361 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education  
362 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

363 (i) Not later than January 1, 2023, the task force shall submit a report  
364 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
365 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
366 education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
367 general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it  
368 submits such report or January 1, 2023, whichever is later.

369 Sec. 8. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) The sum of one hundred fifty thousand  
370 dollars is appropriated to the Office of Early Childhood, from the  
371 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, to support a

372 process facilitator to ensure progress, accountability and to guide the  
 373 implementation of the recommendations of the task force established  
 374 pursuant to section 7 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	19a-87b
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>January 1, 2022, and applicable to taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-749(a)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-749(d)
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	8-210
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To (1) establish a pilot program that authorizes the Commissioner of Early Childhood to issue a license to a person or group of persons to operate a family child care home in a space that is not a private home and that has been provided by an association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, (2) establish a student loan forgiveness program for early childhood educators, (3) establish a personal income tax credit for certain employees of child care service providers, (4) expand eligibility in the Care4Kids program for certain parents and caretakers, (5) to permit families seeking employment or enrolled in certain education programs to participate in programs provided by state-contracted child care centers, and (6) to establish a task force to analyze and make recommendations concerning early childhood educator licensing and workforce development.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*