



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6558

January Session, 2021



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 Section 19a-87b of the general statutes is repealed and the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

170 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) There is established a task force to
171 analyze and make recommendations on issues relating to early
172 childhood workforce development needs in the state.

173 (b) The task force shall examine the following: (1) How to encourage
174 equity-based practices in early childhood education preparation and
175 professional development; (2) ways to address inequity in access to
176 employment opportunities and compensation in the early childhood
177 workforce; (3) the feasibility of creating a new co-authored license that
178 would offer multiple levels of flexibility to address the range of ages,
179 settings and roles in the early childhood field, including a professional
180 continuum for assistants, lead teachers, generalists and specialists, such
181 as early intervention, mental health, integrated special education and
182 rehabilitation therapies; and (4) workforce demands in the state related
183 to the need for early childhood educators providing child care services
184 for infants and toddlers and children up to ages six, seven or eight.

185 (c) The task force shall make recommendations concerning: (1)
186 Legislation for educator preparation requirements in the early
187 childhood field; (2) the creation of a new early childhood teacher license
188 or credential jointly issued by the Office of Early Childhood and the
189 Department of Education; (3) the development of a unifying framework
190 for early childhood educator preparation, in accordance with the
191 National Association for the Education of Young Children and the
192 Council for Exceptional Children - Division of Early Childhood, in order
193 to offer definition of levels for competencies and compensation, such as
194 (A) professional development and alternative routes for aides or
195 classroom assistants, (B) associate degree preparation and alternative
196 routes for assistant teachers, (C) bachelor's degree preparation or post-
197 baccalaureate work for head teachers, (D) bachelor's degree preparation,
198 post-baccalaureate work or graduate degree attainment for specialists,
199 and (E) alignment with competencies to address adult learners,
200 experience in the field, as well as capacity in languages, community
201 context and cultural norms; (4) methods to increase compensation
202 related to competency and degree attainment that will work across all
203 sectors of the early care and education sector including subsidized and
204 parent fee supported programs; and (5) workforce development and the
205 creation of job opportunities in early childhood.

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

207 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
208 one of whom is a professor of early childhood education at a public
209 institution of higher education in the state and one of whom is a
210 representative of a school readiness program, as defined in section 10-
211 16p of the general statutes, or a state-funded child care center pursuant
212 to section 8-210 of the general statutes, as amended by this act;

213 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
214 whom is a faculty member from a community college and one of whom
215 is a representative of a private child care provider that is not receiving
216 state financial assistance under section 8-210 of the general statutes, as
217 amended by this act, or 10-16p of the general statutes;

218 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
219 Representatives who is a representative from the Capitol Region
220 Education Council;

221 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate who is an
222 operator of a family child care home or a representative of an
223 organization that represents or supports the interests of family child
224 care homes;

225 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
226 Representatives who is a representative from the Connecticut Early
227 Childhood Alliance;

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

231 (7) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the commissioner's
232 designee;

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

234 (9) The cochairs of the Connecticut Consortium for the Advancement
235 of Early Childhood Educators; and

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

238 (e) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (3),
239 (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (d) of this section may be a member of the
240 General Assembly.

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

244 (g) The appointments of the speaker of the House of Representatives
245 and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall serve as the

246 chairpersons of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first
247 meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days
248 after the effective date of this section.

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

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

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | July 1, 2021 | 19a-87b |
| Sec. 2 | July 1, 2021 | New section |

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(j), "the cities of" was deleted for proper form, and "in a space within a facility, other than a private family home and that has been approved by the commissioner, that has been provided by such association, organization, corporation, institution or agency" was replaced with "in a space provided by such association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, provided such space has been approved by the commissioner and is not in a private family home" for clarity; in Section 2(b)(2), "flexibly" was replaced with "flexibility" for accuracy; in Section 2(b)(3) "interventionist" was replaced with "intervention" for accuracy; in Section 2(b)(4) "to age six or age eight" was replaced with "and children up to ages six, seven or eight" for clarity; and in Section 2(e) "(1), (2)," was deleted for proper form.

ED Joint Favorable Subst. C/R APP
APP Joint Favorable Subst.

