



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Child Care Services

CCS-1600 LICENSING STUDIES	Effective Date: 12/1/2007
	Revised: 11/21/2011
	Revision Effective: 1/5/2012

Links to the following forms, letters, and/or reference materials are provided in this policy section:

1. [Attempted visit letter](#)
2. [Inactive provider statement](#)
3. [Indicator Checklist](#)
4. Records Review Forms (Working aids)
 - a. [Children's record worksheet \(FDCH\)](#)
 - b. [Staff record worksheet](#)
5. [Revision cover letter](#)

LEGAL AUTHORITY: O.C.G.A. 20-1A-1 et seq.

Cross Reference/See Also:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for child care consultants to conduct annual licensing inspections to evaluate all licensed/registered facilities for their compliance with current rules and regulations.

II. APPLIES TO

- A. Child care consultants
- B. Lead consultants
- C. Regional directors
- D. Administrative assistants

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Archiving Visits** – The process by which consultants transfer visits to the web, web portal, and permanent electronic archive of visits from their laptops.
- B. **Inactive** – When a licensed or registered facility is not currently caring for children for reasons such as an extended illness, birth of a child, and temporary employment outside the facility, but want to remain registered/licensed and agree to comply with the established criteria. A provider who is currently available to enroll children may not be considered inactive. Inactive facilities must pay the required annual license fee.
- C. **KOALA Time** – Electronic calendar used for planning, tracking and documenting consultant's daily work activities.
- D. **Licensing Study** – Annual on-site rule-by-rule inspection of a child care facility to assess compliance with rules and regulations.

- E. **Met** – The compliance category used on inspection reports for rules evaluated during a visit when the provider is in compliance with all the rules in a specific category.
- F. **Not met** – The compliance category used on inspection reports for rules evaluated during a visit when the provider is completely or almost completely not in compliance with a specific rule or category.
- G. **Partially met** – The compliance category used on inspection reports for rules evaluated during a visit when the provider is partially in compliance with a specific rule or category.
- H. **Plan of Improvement** – Written statement that details how the provider will correct or has corrected a rule violation(s), how they will maintain the correction, and a date of correction, that is agreed upon by the provider and the consultant
- I. **Quarter Due** – The licensing inspection is due in the quarter that it is assigned. For example, if the licensing study is due in the second quarter, it should be completed during the months of October, November or December.
- J. **Worker File** – Required file kept by the consultant that contains copies of visits made in the last 12 months, measurement pages, a floor plan, and copies of any other pertinent information from the state file for all licensed/registered facilities.

IV. POLICY

The policy of Bright from the Start is to ensure that child care regional consultants conduct annual, unannounced, on-site, rule-by-rule licensing inspections for each licensed child care learning center, group day care home, and family day care home during their assigned quarter. The entire facility and all services provided by the licensee/registrant will be evaluated at this time. Child care consultants will visit each licensed/registered facility at least two times per year. Licensing studies count as one of the two regulatory visits required for the fiscal year.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Preparation - prior to visiting the facility the consultant will:
 - i. Prepare the inspection report with all appropriate information, including any limitations on the licensed capacity.
 - ii. Review the facility's compliance history for the past year.
 - iii. Make a copy of the facility's last visit to use to determine if previous noncompliance has been corrected.
 - iv. Have all forms and equipment ready and know the directions to the facility.
- B. Upon arrival to conduct the on-site inspection, the consultant will:
 - i. Speak with the program official or person-in-charge and explain the purpose of the visit;
 - ii. Walk-through the facility to count children and staff and document the numbers of staff and children to determine compliance with staff:child ratios;
 - iii. Conduct a walk-through inspection to determine compliance with rules and regulations:
 - 1. Evaluate each classroom, the facility kitchen, outdoor play area(s), vehicle(s), staff records, children's records, transportation records, medication authorization forms, swimming documentation and supervision, and
 - 2. Observe children's activities and staff's interaction and care of the children.
 - iv. Document on the inspection report:
 - 1. Citations in "Findings" written according to Principles of Documentation and the Style Book.
 - 2. Observations, not advice in "Comments".

3. Technical assistance in “Technical Assistance”.
- v. Document on the cover sheet:
 1. Numbers of children and staff observed in each room/playground and what activities each group was engaged in.
 2. Other comments, such as, but not limited to, that the capacity is limited for some reason, for example, at the owner’s request, by the fire marshal or by the septic tank capacity. These comments will not appear on the internet.
- C. Leave a Plan of Improvement Notice (POI notice) when:
 - i. The facility is cited for rule(s) that were previously cited and could be harmful to a child and/or,
 - ii. The facility has shown unwillingness or inability to correct previously identified deficiencies in a critical area.
- D. Exit conference with the administrator or other person-in-charge.
 - i. Discuss the results of the inspection, to include each area of noncompliance.
 - ii. Develop a plan of improvement for each citation.
 - iii. Document the plan of improvement on the inspection report.
 - iv. Run spell-check and proofread the entire report before printing it.
 - v. Discuss with the provider:
 1. Areas in need of improvement (could be, but not necessarily citations),
 2. Ways to improve quality in those areas (technical assistance),
 3. Compliance Level Determination worksheet,
 4. The facility update form and have the provider denote any changes to the program on the form.
 - vi. Obtain administrator’s signature on the cover sheet and Level Determination Worksheet.
 - vii. Sign and date the cover sheet; update arrival time and record departure time.
 - viii. Give a copy of the report and the Compliance Level Determination worksheet to the administrator.
- E. Inactive Status. When no children are in care and the provider states he/she is currently not caring for children, but wants to keep the license or registration, the following steps will be taken:
 - i. The consultant will enter the facility/home to verify that no children are present. The consultant should check all areas of the facility/home.
 - ii. The consultant will ask the provider if they would accept children for enrollment.
 1. If the provider answers yes, the consultant should conduct the appropriate inspection.
 2. If the provider answers no, obtain the provider’s written statement, signed and dated. Acceptable reasons for changing status to inactive include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Medical reasons (provider or family member)
 - b. Pursuing educational credentials
 - c. Working outside the home
 - iii. Inform the provider:
 1. It is the policy of BFTS to notify the Department of Human Services, Child and Parent Services(CAPS) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) of any registered or licensed provider’s inactive status;
 2. That they are to advise the consultant as soon as they start caring for children again;
 3. Payment of the annual license fee is required; and

4. They must notify BFTS of any changes in phone number or e-mail address.
- iv. The consultant will complete the inactive letter and e-mail the letter to the provider with copies to the regional director, lead consultant, CAPS program and the Nutrition Division; send original letter to the regional administrative assistant to be placed in the state file.
- v. The consultant will contact the provider quarterly to determine if they are still inactive and document this on a contact sheet that is submitted to the state file.
- vi. The consultant documents on the regional inactive log located on Share Point; the consultants' name, inactive facility name, address, date the inactive letter was received, the quarterly contact dates and additional comments to explain inactive status.
- vii. If no one is at the facility/home:
 1. The consultant will leave a copy of the attempted visit letter.
 2. When the provider contacts the consultant, the consultant will inform the provider a regulatory visit needs to be made and will ask the provider for the operating days and hours.
 3. If the provider indicates there are children in care, the consultant will:
 - a. Advise the provider an unannounced visit will be made,
 - b. Plan the visit for a future date, and
 - c. Move the visit from the task list to a future date in KOALA Time.
 4. If the provider indicates there are no children in care, ask if they would enroll a child if the parent called or showed up today. If no, the consultant will follow the steps in E. Inactive Status, i- iii, to determine if the provider meets the criteria for inactive status.
 - a. If the provider meets the criteria for inactive status, the provider will submit a notarized written statement stating he/she is not currently caring for children and has no immediate intentions to enroll and care for children.
 - b. The consultant will then follow the steps in E. Inactive Status, iv-vi, above.
 - c. If the provider does not meet the criteria for inactive status, the consultant will inform the provider that a regulatory visit is required.
 5. If the provider does not respond and the consultant cannot locate them, the visit will go back on the task list in Koala Time for the next quarter.
 - a. If the provider does not pay the annual license fee, a revocation will be issued according to the license fee process.
 - b. If the provider does pay the license fee inactive status will continue.

F. Processing the Licensing Study

- i. The consultant will:
 1. Review the report for accuracy, grammar, sufficient detail, completeness, and use spell-check;
 2. Make any changes or corrections and send a corrected copy and revision cover letter to the provider, if applicable;
 3. Copy the completed licensing study for the worker file;
 4. Submit the original report and Compliance Level Determination worksheet to the assigned administrative assistant no later than five business days after completion;

5. Archive the visit no later than five business days after completion.
 6. Update KOALA Time daily to document that the licensing study has been completed;
 7. Submit the facility update form with the licensing study to the administrative assistant.
- ii. The administrative assistant will file the licensing study in the state file within five business days of receipt and update any changes noted on the facility update form in the web portal.

VI. COMMENTS

Under Revision