



# Updated Changes for Exempt Programs and Informal Providers

**Part 1**  
**July 1, 2025**

# Changes include:



Better align with and meet compliance with the Child Care and Development fund (CCDF) requirements



Health and Safety requirements will be strengthened to better protect children in care



Increased monitoring from the Department to Programs that receive Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidies



Finding resources and tools for Programs and Providers to maintain a healthy environment



CCDF funding is the primary federal funding source that helps families access child care. It also improves the quality of child care for all children. In Georgia, CAPS administers subsidies to Programs and Providers that qualify.

If a Program or Provider participates in CAPS, they are to adhere by the health and safety standards, as well as receive required monitoring visits by the Department.

# Chapters Affected For Programs Receiving CAPS subsidies

## Exempt Programs

- Criminal Records Check
- CPR and First Aid
- Training Orientation
- Policies and Procedures
- Swimming
- Staff Training
- Transportation
- Required Reporting
- Physical Plant
- Exemption Requirements

## Informal Providers

- Criminal Records Check
- CPR and First Aid
- Policies and Procedures
- Physical Plant
- Training Orientation
- Staff Training
- Required Reporting



## Criminal Records Check Definition updated

“Comprehensive Records Check Determination” means a satisfactory or unsatisfactory determination by the Department, based upon a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint based criminal record check, a search of appropriate sex offender registries, repositories, or data bases ~~the National Crime Information Centers National Sex Offender Registry, .....~~

Exempt & Informal

# Criminal Backgrounds Check-Portability

**Exempt-D(5)**  
**Informal-D(1)(c)**

Portability for Providers, Employees and Provisional Employees, excluding Students-in-Training. Only the most recently issued determination letter is eligible for portability and must be ported electronically. A Provider may accept a satisfactory Fingerprint Records Check Determination letter for a Provisional Employee or a satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination letter issued by the Department for a potential Employee if the individual's Records Check Clearance Date is within the preceding 12 months from the hire date, the individual has not had a lapse of employment from the child care industry that lasted for 180 days (six (6) months) or longer, and the Provider does not know or reasonably should not know that the individual's satisfactory status has changed.



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# First Aid and CPR

Exempt-G(1)(a-d)

Informal-G(1)(a-c)

## (1) Training

(a) All Staff who provide direct care to children:

- Biennial training program in **pediatric** cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Triennial training program in **pediatric** first aid
- Obtained within the first **45 days** of employment
- Current and valid evidence of training completion maintained on the Program's premises
- These hours will not count towards the required annual training hours

(b) The training must be done by certified or licensed health care professionals or trainers and must deal with the provision of emergency care to infants and children.

# Exempt and Informal

# Chapter G: First Aid and CPR

## (2) Staffing Requirement

- (a) When any child is present, at least 50% of caregiver staff present shall be trained
- (b) **New Core Standard:** There must always be one staff person present in each classroom where children are present with current and valid pediatric training
- (c) During any field trip or transportation of children, there must always be a staff member present with current and valid pediatric training
- (d) Program Director must have current and valid pediatric training at all times



# Physical Plant Exempt-L(4)

## New Standard:

Requires the Program and surrounding premises to be kept clean, free of debris and in good repair. Hygienic measures such as, but not limited to, screened windows and proper waste disposal procedures shall be utilized to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, roaches and other vermin at the Program.

Exempt



# Physical Plant Informal-L(1)L(2)(a-b)

## Updated Standard:

L(1)Indoor Storage Areas. Potentially hazardous equipment, materials and supplies shall be stored in a locked area inaccessible to children. Examples of items to be stored include non-food related products under pressure in aerosol dispensing cans, flammable and corrosive materials to include but not limited to heaters and fire places, cleaning supplies, poisons, insecticides, office supplies, weapons, and industrial-sized or commercial buckets with a capacity of three gallons or more or any other similar device with rigid sides which would not tip over if a toddler fell into the container head first.

L(2)(a-b)- (a) At least one approved smoke detector shall be on each floor of the Home and such detectors shall be maintained in working order. (b) At least one fire extinguisher shall be kept in the child care area. The extinguisher shall be maintained in working order and shall be inaccessible to the children.

Informal



# Staff Training Orientation

## Exempt-P(1-5)

### Informal-O(1)(3)a-b,O(4)

- Program Orientation – should include volunteers, students-in-training, independent contractors, etc.
- The initial orientation must include the following subjects: the Program's policies and procedures; the portions of these rules dealing with the care, health and safety of children; the Employee's assigned duties and responsibilities; reporting requirements for suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or deprivation; communicable diseases and serious injuries; emergency plans; childhood injury control; the administration of medicine; reducing the risk of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID), which includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS); hand washing; fire safety; water safety; and prevention of HIV/Aids and blood borne pathogens

# Staff Training Orientation

Each staff member with direct care responsibilities are required to complete health and safety training and Health and Safety Orientation training. Each staff member with direct care responsibilities shall complete health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment. The state-approved training hours obtained will count toward required first year training hours.

## Other Health & Safety related topics could include:

- (i) Child development (e.g., developmental domains (cognitive; social and emotional; physical development and motor skills; communication, language, and literacy; approaches to play and learning), discipline and guidance techniques, children with special needs);
- (ii) Health (e.g., nutrition and the support of breast feeding, physical activity, prevention and control of illnesses and infectious diseases, immunizations, prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions, cleanliness, sanitation, and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants);
- (iii) Safety (e.g., prevention of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) which includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and the use of safe sleeping practices, medication administration, injury control and prevention, transportation, handling and storage of hazardous materials, identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic, and emergency preparedness planning and response);
- (iv) Child abuse and neglect (e.g., identification and reporting, meeting the needs of abused and/or neglected children, prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma and child maltreatment).



# Annual Training for Staff: Exempt-P(4) Informal-O(3)

- Annual Training
  - 10 hours of diverse training for all staff annually (after first year of employment)
  - 10 hours must now include the following:
    - ***At least two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices;***
    - ***At least two (2) hours in on-going child development and health and safety related topics***
    - No more than two (2) of the required ten (10) hours in business-related topics (e.g., parental communication, recordkeeping, management, business planning).



# Staff Training Exempt-P(5) Informal-O(4)

Documentation of Training-Evidence of orientation and training shall be documented and maintained in the Personnel file and/or Georgia's workforce registry and professional development system of each Staff member which shall be available to the Department for inspection. Documentation shall include the title of the training courses, the dates, and the number of hours of the courses, and the names of the trainers or sponsoring organizations.

# Policies and Procedures

Exempt-J(1)(a-i)  
Informal-J(1)(a-g), J (2), J(4)

- **Programs and Providers must have written policies to include:**
- (J)(1)(a) exclusion of children with contagious illnesses; (b) notification to parents in the event their child becomes ill while at the Program; (c) the notification to all parents of enrolled children when a reportable contagious illness is present at the Program; (d) prevention of and response to food and allergic reactions (e) A description of the practices followed by the Program to prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma in children up to five years of age that includes the following information: how to recognize, respond to, and report the signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; strategies to assist staff members in understanding how to care for infants and how to cope with a crying, fussing, or distraught child; strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to five years of age; and a list of prohibited behaviors when dealing with children, (f) The handling and appropriate disposal of bodily fluids and storage of hazardous materials (soiled clothing and bedding), (g) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Informal  
and  
Exempt





# Continued Policies and Procedures

## Exempt-J(1)(a-i)

### Informal-J(a-g), J(2), J(4)

(J)(2) Emergency preparedness and response. A written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to severe weather, loss of electrical power or water, death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster which may occur at the Program. The Provider will have in place procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, and continuity of operations. The plan must apply to all children in care and will include specific accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions. Such plan shall include assurance that no Personnel will impede in any way the delivery of emergency care or services to a child by licensed or certified emergency health care professionals.

(J)(4) Programs and Providers shall implement behavior management and discipline actions used by the Program, to include the Provider's practices regarding the expulsion and suspension of children enrolled for care.

Informal  
and  
Exempt



# Required Reports

## Exempt- J

## Informal-S

The following incidents must be reported to the Department within twenty-four (24) hours or the next work day:

(1) Child Abuse, Neglect or Deprivation. Within twenty-four (24) hours or the next work day, suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect or deprivation shall be reported to the local County Department of Family and Children Services in accordance with state law and to the Department, notifying that such a report was made. (2) Communicable Diseases. Any cases or suspected cases of notifiable communicable diseases (COVID-19, Tuberculosis, Measles, etc.) or any viruses or illnesses identified during a public health emergency, immediately to the Department and to the local County Health Department as required by the rules of the Georgia Department of Public Health, Notification of Disease. (3) Death. (4) Serious illness or injury requiring hospitalization or professional medical attention. (5) Fire. (6) Structural disaster (7) Any emergency requiring temporally relocation of children (8) Any employee who acquires a Criminal record.



# Swimming Exempt-Q(5)

## New Standard:

- Swimming Local Approval. Requires the program to obtain and maintain applicable local approvals regarding the design, construction, and operation required for permanent swimming or wading pools located on the program premises

Exempt



# Transportation Exempt-R(7)(c)5

## Updated Standard:

- Passenger transportation checklists shall be maintained with the Program for three years of the last day of service of any given child.

Exempt



# Exemption Requirements Exempt-X(1-4)

- **New Standard:**

(1) Posted Notices. A program granted an exemption to post in a prominent place near the front entrance of the facility both a copy of the exemption approval letter issued by the department and a notice provided by the department that will notify a parent or guardian that the program is not licensed and is not required to be licensed by the state.

- (2) Parent Agreement. When a parent or legal guardian initially registers a child with an exempt program, the parent or guardian shall sign a form indicating that the parent or guardian has been advised and understands that the program is not licensed and is not required to be licensed by the state.
- (3) Operating outside conditions. The program operates within the criteria of the exemption granted.
- (4) Email address and operational information. The program must provide the department with a valid e-mail address or with other information requested by the department such as but not limited to, the months, days and hours of operation, ages of children served and operating address.

Exempt



# Exempt Visit Policy



Effective July 1, 2025, programs may receive two visits for the fiscal year



Health and Safety Monitoring Visit



Health and Safety Follow Up Visit



Technical Assistance Visit



## **Resources:**

[www.dec.state.ga.us/CCS/Exemptions](http://www.dec.state.ga.us/CCS/Exemptions)

[www.dec.state.ga.us/koala](http://www.dec.state.ga.us/koala)

[www.gapds.dec.state.ga.us](http://www.gapds.dec.state.ga.us)



**Questions?**  
**Please email or call:**

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