



Health & Safety Standards for License-Exempt Providers

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Health & Safety Standards for License-Exempt Providers



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Overview

This Health & Safety Standards manual is intended to be a guide for license-exempt programs.

Unless participating in the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidy program, DECAL will monitor license-exempt programs on a sampling basis to ensure compliance with exemption requirements and to collect health and safety data for research purposes. License-Exempt programs participating in CAPS will receive monitoring visits at least annually. Government owned (category 1) and day camp programs (category 7) are eligible under CAPS policy to receive subsidy funding.]

The Health and Safety Standards are required for programs participating in CAPS. Standards that have more risk to children and directly affect Health and Safety are identified as Core Standards and are highlighted in yellow in this document. The Standards are recommendations for license-exempt programs not participating in CAPS.

All license-exempt facilities must meet all local requirements such as complying with building, zoning, and fire regulations.

If you have any questions about participating in the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidy program, visit CAPS.dec.ga.gov, email caps.support@dec.ga.gov or call 404-657-3434 or 1-888-442-7735.

DECAL requirements for Exempt Programs

(Excerpt from “Rules for Child Care Learning Programs, Chapter 591-1-1”)

591-1-1-.46 Exemptions

(1) All programs providing group care for children shall obtain either a License, Permit or a commission for an early care and education program or an exemption from the Department, as applicable. Any person or entity operating or planning to operate such a service believed to meet the criteria for exemption from licensure, as listed below, shall apply to the Department for exemption by submitting the Department’s application for exemption.

(a) Exemption Requirements.

1. The application for exemption shall be notarized and shall include:

- (i) A valid and current e-mail address,
- (ii) A written description of services, fees, ages of children to be served, months, days, and hours of operation and location,
- (iii) Copies of written policies, advertisements, parental agreement forms, and other materials to support the criteria for exemption as determined by the Department.
- (iv) A sworn statement that the information provided to the Department is accurate and truthful.

2. The exemptions granted by the Department are exemptions from licensure, and do not affect the authority of local, regional or state health department officials, the state fire marshal, local fire prevention officials, local or regional building officials or zoning officials to inspect and approve facilities and locations. Programs operated in a residence are not eligible for exemption. Additionally, the exemption is only valid at the address listed on the application.

3. A program granted an exemption shall 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 that the program is not licensed and is not required to be licensed by the state. The notice shall be at least ½ inch letters and shall contain the Department’s telephone number and website address.

4. A program approved for exemption shall maintain attendance records for children. When a Parent initially registers a child with an exempt program, the Parent shall sign a form indicating the Parent has been advised and understands that the program is not licensed and is not required to be licensed by the state. The program must maintain the attendance records and parental notification forms during the time the child is enrolled in the program and for one year after the child no longer attends the program. All records shall be made available to any authorized representative of the Department upon request.

5. Any program granted an exemption from licensure that subsequently loses accreditation, closes and/or ceases operation shall notify the Department in writing within five (5) business days of such a change. A program granted an exemption that has subsequent material changes in the operation of their program, such as, but not limited to, a

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change of physical location, a change in operating months, days, and/or hours, or a change in the ages served shall be required to submit a new application for exemption to the Department.

6. Programs granted an exemption may be required to periodically update the Department on the status of their exemption and operating information such as but not limited to submitting an annual report that would contain information related to the exemption approval.

7. The Department may rescind an approval for exemption when one or more of the following is determined by the department:

- (i) The program no longer meets the criteria for the exemption.
- (ii) The program provided false information during the exemption request process or during an investigation.
- (iii) The program failed to comply with local, regional, and state health department, fire marshal, fire prevention, and building/zoning guidelines/requirements.
- (iv) The program failed to provide the Department with a valid and current 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.

(b) Exemption Categories. The following types of programs shall be exempt from licensure:

[NOTE: Only government owned (category 1) and day camp programs (category 7) as highlighted in yellow are eligible under CAPS policy to receive subsidy funding.]

1. Programs which are owned and operated by any department or agency of state, county, or municipal government. This includes, but is not limited to, the customary school day, as defined in Georgia law, and before- and/or after-school programs in public schools operated by the public school system and staffed with school system employees and recreation programs operated by city or county parks and recreation departments and staffed with city or county employees.

2. Private non-public educational programs with an established curriculum for children five (5) years and older that operate during the school term for the customary school day, as defined by Georgia law.

3. A private non-public school which provides education in any grades from kindergarten through 12th grade, meets the requirements under Georgia law for private schools (See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690), and is accredited by one or more of the entities listed in O.C.G.A. § 20-3-519(6)(A) and which provides care before, after, or both before and after the customary school day, as defined in Georgia law, to its students as an auxiliary service to such students during the regular school year only. The accrediting entities listed in O.C.G.A. § 20-3-519(6)(A) are:

- (i) The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools;
- (ii) The Georgia Accrediting Commission;
- (iii) The Georgia Association of Christian Schools;
- (iv) The Association of Christian Schools International;
- (v) The Georgia Private School Accreditation Council;
- (vi) The Southern Association of Independent Schools;

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(vii) The Accrediting Commission for Independent Study. (O.C.G.A § 20-3- 519(6.1)(A).

4. Accredited private non-public educational programs with an established curriculum for four-year-old children for the customary school day, as defined in Georgia law, that are not part of a full day Child Care Learning Program and are an integral part of an accredited private non-public school that provides elementary or secondary instruction or both, providing the accreditation specifically covers these ages; any before and/or after school hours for four-year-old children who attend such a program as described above, provided the children do not leave the premises of the accredited private non-public school and the program is staffed with employees of that private non-public school.

5. Parent's Morning Out, Parent's Night Out, or similar programs which operate for no more than one session of up to four (4) consecutive hours per day and which limit attendance to no more than eight (8) hours a week per child.

6. Nursery schools, playschools, kindergartens or other educational programs for children two (2) years through six (6) years of age which operate for no more than four (4) consecutive hours per day.

7. Day camp programs for children five (5) years and older that are operated between school terms, whose primary purpose is to provide organized recreational, religious, or instructional activities. The day camp programs may operate during summer and other school breaks and shall operate for no more than twelve (12) hours per day.

8. Short-term educational or recreational activities or classes for children in which the supervision and care of the children are incidental to their participation in the activity or training in specific subjects, such as, but not limited to, music lessons, dance classes, swim lessons, etc. The provider is not assuming responsibility for supervision and care of the children outside of the classes or activities the children participate in and shall not advertise or otherwise represent that child care services are offered.

9. Any short-term child care service provided by an establishment, such as, but not limited to, a religious facility, health club, or retail store, and such program or service meets all of the following:

(i) Operated on the premises of the establishment;

(ii) Operated for the convenience of the Parents and for the use of on-duty employees or students attending classes;

(iii) Parents are participating in activities provided by the establishment on the premises of the establishment;

(iv) Parents are readily available;

(v) Attendance of child in the short-term child care service is limited to no more than four (4) hours per day and no more than ten (10) hours per week, except in the instance of child care services offered at infrequent events such as, but not limited to, conferences and weddings.

10. Programs operated after the customary school day, as defined in Georgia law, for children five (5) years and older that are strictly instructional and skill-based in a single talent, ability, expertise, proficiency or subject or in closely related skills, proficiencies or subjects, including but not limited to classes such as art, cheerleading, dance, drama, gymnastics, martial arts and music, and the programs comply with all of the following:

(i) Programs provide direct instruction in the single skill or subject and/or closely related skills or subjects to every child each day the child is present;

(ii) Programs do not provide services that are not directly related to the single skill or subject or to the closely related skills or subjects, such as but not limited to homework assistance. During the hours of operation, programs

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may provide services related to the instruction, such as transportation and giving children time to change into proper clothes/gear;

(iii) Programs shall not advertise or otherwise represent that the program is a child care facility, an after-school program, or that the program offers child care services;

(iv) Programs shall not prepare meals and snacks, but may provide ready-to-eat snacks, such as pre-packaged snacks;

(v) The majority of the program staff responsible for instruction shall possess specialized qualifications to instruct in that skill or subject, and the program shall submit documentation of such specialized qualifications of staff to the Department at the time of application for exemption or as requested by the Department;

(vi) Programs shall inform Parents about the physical risks a child may face while participating in the program;

(vii) Such programs shall not be an integral part of a licensed Child Care Learning Program;

(viii) Enrollment information shall clearly define the duration of the program.

11. Short term educational programs offered to school-aged children in which the supervision and care of the children are incidental to their participation in the short-term educational program, and the provider is not assuming responsibility for the provision of daily child care outside the scheduled program. The majority of staff responsible for the direct delivery of education services to children possesses specialized qualifications that are directly related to the short term educational programs being offered, and the program shall submit documentation of such specialized qualifications to the department at the time of application for exemption or as requested by the Department. The sole or primary purpose of such short term educational programs is:

(i) To prepare children for advancement to the next educational level through a prescribed course of study or curriculum;

(ii) To provide specialized tutoring services through a prescribed course of study or curriculum to assist children with the passage of mandatory educational proficiency examinations;

(iii) To provide specialized tutoring services through a prescribed course of study or curriculum to assist children in specific academic areas, such as, but not limited to, foreign language, mathematics, science, etc.

12. Any program or facility providing care for school-aged children that is operated by, or in affiliation with a national membership non-profit organization that was created for the purpose of providing youth services and youth development, that charges a membership fee for children and may receive monthly, weekly, or daily fees for services. Such program or facility holds membership in good standing and is certified by its national association as complying with the association's purposes, procedures, minimum standards and mandatory requirements. Such national membership organizations include, but are not limited to, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

13. Any program providing group care for children for no pay.

14. A Program that is licensed by the Department may request an exemption from licensure if the Program's program is an integral part of an established religious congregation or religious school that conducts regularly scheduled classes, courses of study, or educational programs and is a member of or accredited by or certified by a state, regional, or national accrediting agency for religious educational instruction or a state, regional, or national accrediting agency for educational instruction as recognized and approved by the Department if such accrediting entity uses standards that are substantially similar to those established by the Department. In addition to the

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requirements listed above applicable to all exemptions, the following additional requirements shall apply to Programs seeking an exemption under this provision:

(i) A Program seeking such exemption from licensure shall be required to submit to the Department documentation of certification or accreditation, including a copy of its most recent certification or accreditation inspection report, and any other pertinent documentation as requested by the Department, such as non-profit tax-exempt verification. The accrediting agency must conduct regularly scheduled visits to the program while such program remains accredited.

(ii) If such exemption is granted, the program shall submit annual documentation to the Department verifying its continued certification or accreditation, including a copy of its most recent certification or accreditation inspection report, and other pertinent documentation as may be requested by the Department.

(iii) Such exemptions granted by the Department are valid as long as the program remains certified or accredited. The program shall provide the Department written notice within five (5) business days of the program's loss of certification or accreditation, including a copy of such notification from the certifying or accrediting entity. The Department shall rescind the program's exemption granted herein upon notification of the loss of certification or accreditation.

(iv) Any Program seeking such exemption shall comply with all applicable requirements for background checks for Directors, Provisional Employees and Employees as required in O.C.G.A. § 20-1A-30 et seq., Chapter 591-1-1, Rules for Child Care Learning Programs, Department policies, as well as applicable local, regional, and state health department, state fire marshal, and local fire prevention guidelines/requirements while such exemption is in effect. The Department retains jurisdiction over programs granted such exemption to conduct unannounced periodic background check audits and to conduct complaint investigations regarding compliance with background check requirements, as well as compliance with local, regional, and state health department, state fire marshal, and local fire prevention guidelines/requirements.

(v) The Department may rescind such exemption for a program's failure to comply with the requirements for background checks for directors/employees pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-1A-30 et seq., Chapter 591-1-1, Rules for Child Care Learning Programs, and Department policies.

(vi) Any Program applying for such exemption that is owned and/or under the legal control/direction of the certifying or accrediting entity shall not be approved by the Department.

(vii) A Program seeking such exemption shall adopt and comply with the minimum standards of its certifying or accrediting entity for the operation of the Program's program. Such minimum standards adopted by the Program shall be published and made available to Parents of enrolled or prospective children upon request.

(viii) A program granted such exemption shall comply with the requirements regarding notification to Parents of enrolled children if the program does not carry liability insurance.

Cite as Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. R. 591-1-1-.46

Authority: O.C.G.A. § [20-1A-1](#) et seq.

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Amended: F. Dec. 4, 2015; eff. Dec. 24, 2015.

Health & Safety Standards

A. Activities

Providers should provide a daily planned program of varied and developmentally appropriate activities that promote the social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language and literacy development of each child. Staff should use a variety of teaching methods to accommodate the needs of the children's different learning styles.

Individual Attention. Personnel should provide individual attention to each child as evidenced by:

1. Responding promptly to the child's distress signals and need for comfort.
2. Playing with and talking to the children.
3. Providing and assisting the child with personal care in a manner appropriate to the child's age level, i.e., providing the child privacy in dressing, diapering and toileting functions as the developmental age of the child dictates.

Staff should not engage in, or allow children or other adults to engage in, activities that could be detrimental to a child's health or well-being, such as but not limited to, horse play, rough play, wrestling, and picking up a child in a manner that could cause injury.

B. Bathrooms

Flush toilets and lavatories (hand washing sinks) with running water should be provided in the following minimum ratios for the use of all children:

Number of Children	Toilets and Restrooms *
1-12	1
13-25	2
26-50	3
51-75	4
76-100	5
101-125	6
126-150	7
151-175	8

Each additional group of twenty-five (25) children should require one (1) additional toilet and lavatory.

* For children being potty-trained, at least one (1) flush toilet should be provided. If used, nursery potty chairs may not be substituted for a required flush toilet.

Location of Bathrooms. Bathrooms should be located on each floor in or adjacent to child care areas and rooms.

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In lieu of the requirements set forth in subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, School-age only facilities should provide at least one (1) toilet and (1) lavatory for each group of twenty-five (25) children on the premises.

Supplies. Bathrooms should be within easy reach of children and equipped with soap, toilet tissue and single-use towels or cloth towels used only once between launderings.

Cleanliness. Bathrooms should be cleaned daily with a disinfectant.

C. Children's Records

Programs should maintain a file for each child while such child is in care and for a period of one (1) year after such child is no longer enrolled. The file should contain emergency contact information including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Identifying information about the child to include: name, date of birth, sex, address, living arrangement if not with both Parents.

(b) Identifying information about the Parent(s) to include: names of both Parents, if applicable, home and work addresses, and home and work telephone numbers.

(c) Identifying information about the person(s) to contact in emergencies when the Parent cannot be reached to include name(s) and telephone number(s).

These records must be readily accessible to on-site staff at all times and shall be made available to the Department in printed or written form upon request.

D. Criminal Records Check CORE STANDARDS

Every staff member shall have a Satisfactory Background Check Determination before the individual is present at the program while any child is present for care.

No staff member with an Unsatisfactory Background Check Determination shall be present at a program when any child is present for care.

Valid Evidence of a satisfactory background check should be maintained at the program site for the Director and all staff members for the duration of employment plus one year, and such evidence must be made immediately available to the Department upon request.

A Satisfactory Comprehensive Background Check is required for any person providing direct care for or may have unsupervised access to children. **The background check must be processed by DECAL, and the determination letter must be issued by DECAL. Any other fingerprint or background check will not satisfy the CAPS requirement. Instructions can be found at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/CCS/CriminalRecordsCheck.aspx>**

Recheck required. A new Comprehensive Background Check Determination should be obtained at the following times:

1. If the program knows or reasonably should know that a Director or Employee has been arrested or charged for any covered Crime; and

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2. If the time between the new and the prior records check determination is not more than five years if remaining at the same employment.

3 if the person leaves child care employment for six months or more and then returns to child care employment.

4. if the person leaves employment at the facility where the background check was obtained and joins employment at another facility one year or more after the background check was obtained.

E. Discipline CORE STANDARDS

Disciplinary actions used to correct a child's behavior, guidance techniques and any activities in which the children participate or observe at the program shall not be detrimental to the physical or mental health of any child.

Personnel shall not:

(a) Physically or sexually abuse a child or engage or permit others to engage in sexually overt conduct in the presence of any child enrolled in the Program;

(b) Inflict corporal/physical punishment upon a child;

(c) Shake, jerk, pinch or handle a child roughly;

(d) Verbally abuse or humiliate a child which includes, but is not limited to, the use of threats, profanity or belittling remarks about a child or his family;

(e) Isolate a child in a dark room, closet or unsupervised area;

(f) Use mechanical or physical restraints or devices to discipline children;

(g) Use medication to discipline or control children's behavior without written medical authorization issued by a licensed professional and given with the parent's written consent;

(h) Restrict unreasonably a child from going to the bathroom;

(i) Punish toileting accidents;

(j) Force-feed a child or withhold feeding a child regularly scheduled meals and/or snacks;

(k) Force or withhold naps;

(l) Allow children to discipline or humiliate other children;

(m) Confine a child for disciplinary purposes to a swing, highchair, infant carrier, walker or jumpseat;

(n) Commit any criminal act, as defined under Georgia law which is set forth in O.C.G.A. § 16-1-1 *et seq.*, in the presence of any child enrolled in the program.

F. Equipment and Toys

All indoor and outdoor furniture, activity materials, and equipment should be used:

- (a) In a safe and appropriate manner by each Employee and child in attendance; and
- (b) In accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, recommendations, and intended use.

All equipment and furniture shall be used only by the age-appropriate group of children. Equipment and furniture shall be:

- (a) Free from hazardous conditions such as, but not limited to, sharp rough edges or toxic paint;
- (b) Kept clean;
- (c) Placed so as to permit the children's freedom of movement and to minimize danger of accident and collision;
- (d) Secured if equipment and furniture is of a weight or mass that could cause injury from tipping, falling, or being pulled or pushed over. Potentially unstable equipment and furniture that might injure a child if not secured include, but are not limited to, televisions, chests of drawers, bookcases, shelving, cabinets and fish tanks. Examples of items not required to be secured include, but are not limited to, child-sized tables and chairs, rocking chairs, and cribs.

CORE STANDARD

G. First Aid and CPR

All Staff who provide direct care to children must obtain certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation within the first 90 days of employment..

H. Hygiene CORE STANDARDS

Handwashing, Children. Children's hands shall be washed with liquid soap and warm running water:

- (a) Before and after eating meals and snacks, and handling or touching food; and
- (b) After toileting and diapering.

Handwashing, Staff. Staff shall wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water:

- (a) Before and after eating meals and snacks, and handling or touching food;
- (b) After diapering each child; and
- (c) After toileting or assisting children with toileting.

I. Medications CORE STANDARDS

Parental Authorization. Except for first aid or as authorized under Georgia law, Personnel should not dispense prescription or non-prescription medications to a child without specific written authorization from the child's physician or parent. Such authorization will include when applicable, date; full name of the child; name of the medication; prescription number, if any; dosage; the dates to be given; the time of day to be dispensed; and signature of parent.

Dispensing Records. The program shall maintain a record of all medications dispensed to children by Personnel to include the date, time and amount of medication that was administered; any noticeable adverse reactions to the medication; and the signature or initials of the person administering the medication.

Storage. Medications shall be kept in a locked storage cabinet or container which is not accessible to the children and stored separate from cleaning chemicals, supplies or poisons. Medications requiring refrigeration shall be placed in a leakproof container in a refrigerator that is not accessible to the children.

J. Policies and Procedures

Program shall have a written policy regarding the following:

- The exclusion of children with contagious illness
- Notification of parents in the event their child becomes ill while at the facility
- The notification of all parents of enrolled children when a reportable contagious illness is present in the facility
- The prevention of and response to food and allergic reactions
- Emergency preparedness and response. A written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to severe weather, loss of electrical power or water and death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster which may occur at the program. The program 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.
- The handling and appropriate disposal of bodily fluids and storage of hazardous materials (soiled clothing and bedding)
- Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

Programs shall conduct drills for fire, tornado and other emergency situations. The fire drills will be conducted monthly and tornado and other emergency situation drills will be conducted every six months. The program shall maintain documentation of the dates and times of these drills for two years.

The program shall provide the Parent(s) with a copy of the program's policies and procedures.

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K. Personnel Records

Programs shall maintain a personnel file on all Staff for the duration of the term of employment plus one calendar year, and it shall contain the following:

- (a) Identifying information to include: name, date of birth, current address and current telephone number;
- (b) All training referenced by these standards should include: title of training, date of training, trainer's signature, location of training and number of clock hours obtained;
- (c) Verification of a Satisfactory Records Check Determination.

L. Physical Plant

Required approvals. The construction of a new building or any planned structural changes to an existing program building shall obtain approval from the local zoning authorities, fire safety agencies and local building authorities. Construction and maintenance work shall take place only in areas that are not accessible to the children.

Fire Safety. A program must be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations issued by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal or state inspector, including a certificate of occupancy if required prior to receiving any children for care.

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, cleaning supplies, poisons, insecticides, office supplies 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. **CORE STANDARD**

M. Playgrounds CORE STANDARDS

Fence or Approved Barriers. It is recommended that playgrounds be protected from traffic or other hazards by a four (4) foot or higher secure fence or other barrier. Fencing material shall not present a hazard to children and shall be maintained so as to prevent children from leaving the playground area by any means other than through an approved access route. Fence gates should be kept closed except when persons are entering or exiting the area.

If the outdoor play space has no fence or barrier, the program official should create a plan to ensure children are protected from vehicular traffic, water hazards, and any other potential hazards while participating in outdoor play.

Equipment. Playground equipment shall provide an opportunity for the children to engage in a variety of experiences and shall be age-appropriate. The outdoor equipment shall be free from hazards such as, but not limited to, lead-based paint, sharp corners, and shall be regularly maintained in such a way as to be free of rust and splinters that could pose significant safety hazard to the children. All equipment shall be arranged so as not to obstruct supervision of children. Climbing and swinging equipment shall be anchored and have a resilient surface beneath the equipment. The fall-zone from such equipment shall be adequately maintained to assure continuing resiliency.

Safety and Upkeep of Playground. Playgrounds shall be kept clean, free from litter and free of hazards, such as but not limited to non-resilient surfaces under the fall-zone of play equipment, rocks, exposed tree roots and exposed sharp edges of concrete or equipment.

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N. Staff Requirements

Programs must have a Director/Administrator who is responsible for the supervision, operation and maintenance of the program. This person should be on the premises and if absent from the program at any time during the hours of operation, there shall be an officially designated person on-site to assume responsibility for the operation of the program.

O. Staff:Child Ratios and Supervision CORE STANDARDS

Program's shall establish groupings of children for care and maintain at least Staff:child ratios as follows:

Ages of Children	Staff:Child Ratio*	Maximum Group Size **
Infants less than one (1) year old or children under eighteen (18) months who are not walking	1:6	12
One (1) year olds who are walking	1:8	16
Two (2) year olds	1:10	20
Three (3) year olds	1:15	30
Four (4) year olds	1:18	36
Five (5) year olds	1:20	40
Six (6) years and older	1:25	50

Mixed-Age Groups. The Staff:child ratios for a mixed-age group shall be based on the age of the youngest group of children that includes more than twenty percent (20%) of the total number of children in the mixed-age group.

Supervision. Children shall be supervised at all times. "Supervision" means that the appropriate number of Staff members are physically present in the area where children are being cared for and are providing watchful oversight to the children. The persons supervising in the child care area must be alert, and able to respond promptly to the needs and actions of the children being supervised.

P. Staff Training

Program Orientation. Prior to assignment to children or task, all staff must receive an orientation on the following subjects:

- (a) The program's policies and procedures;
- (b) The portions of these standards dealing with the care, health and safety of children;
- (c) The staff member's assigned duties and responsibilities;

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- (d) Reporting requirements for suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or deprivation; communicable diseases and serious injuries;
- (e) Emergency plans;
- (f) Childhood injury control;
- (g) The administration of medicine;
- (h) Reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS);
- (i) Hand washing;
- (j) Fire Safety;
- (k) Water Safety;
- (l) Prevention of HIV/Aids and blood borne pathogens.

Health & Safety Orientation training

Each staff member with direct care responsibilities shall complete health and safety training within the first 90 days of employment. The training must address the following health and safety topics:

- (a) Prevention and control of infectious diseases;
- (b) Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;
- (c) Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;
- (d) Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions;
- (e) Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- (f) Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma;
- (g) Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a human-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility);
- (h) Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants; and
- (i) Precautions in transporting children (if applicable).
- (j) Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect
- (k) Child Development

The Health and Safety Orientation Certificate that includes all topic requirements can be obtained by locating a training vendor offering this course at GaPDS.decal.ga.gov. DECAL provides this training at no charge to Georgia participants through Pennsylvania State University, Better Kid Care On Demand training at <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/early-care/ccdbg> . Choose the course for Georgia Health and Safety Orientation Training.

Ongoing Training

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On an annual basis, all supervisory and caregiver personnel, shall attend ten (10) clock hours of training which is task-focused in early childhood education or child development or subjects relating to job assignment and is offered by an accredited college, university or vocational program or other Department-approved source.

Q. Swimming Pools and Water-related Activities CORE STANDARDS

Accessibility of Pools. All swimming and wading pools must be adequately fenced and inaccessible to children except during supervised activities.

Supervision of Children in Water Over Two (2) Feet Deep. For water-related activity (such as swimming, fishing, boating or wading) in water over two (2) feet deep, continuous supervision of children must be provided at least as follows:

Ages of Children	Staff:Child Ratio*
Under two and one-half (2 1/2) yrs.	1:2
Two and one-half (2 1/2) to four (4) yrs.	1:5
Four (4) yrs. and older who cannot swim a distance of fifteen (15) yards unassisted **	1:6
Four (4) yrs. and older who can swim a distance of fifteen (15) yards unassisted **	1:15

* At least one person must have current evidence of having completed successfully a training program in lifeguarding offered by a water-safety instructor certified by the American Red Cross or YMCA or YWCA or other recognized standard-setting agency for water safety instruction. Such person may be a program staff member or an employee of a water facility (e.g., local swimming pool).

** In lieu of requiring each child to take a swimming test to determine whether the child can swim a distance of fifteen (15) yards unassisted, program staff may accept copies of certificates or cards from a recognized water-safety instruction organization showing that the child has successfully completed a swimming class which required the child to swim a distance

Supervision of Children in Water Less than Two (2) Feet Deep. For water-related activity (such as swimming, fishing, boating or wading) in water less than two (2) feet deep (such as a wading pool), continuous supervision must be provided in accordance with normal Staff:child ratios which are as follows:

Ages of Children	Staff:Child Ratio*
Infants less than one (1) year old or children under eighteen (18) months who are not walking	1:6
One (1) year olds who are walking	1:8

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Two (2) year olds	1:10
Three (3) year olds	1:15
Four (4) year olds	1:18
Five (5) year olds	1:20
Six (6) years and older	1:25

Additional Supervision. At least one (1) additional Staff member above the required Staff:child ratios for any water-related activity (such as swimming, fishing, boating, or wading) shall be available to rotate among the age groups as needed when any of the following circumstances are present:

- (a) the majority of the children in a group are not accustomed to or are afraid of the water;
- (b) the majority of the children in a group comprised of children who cannot swim a distance of 15 yards unassisted cannot touch the bottom of the water facility without submerging their heads;
- (c) the water facility is particularly crowded;
- (d) the children have special needs which impact on their ability to participate safely in the water-related activity.

R. Transportation CORE STANDARDS

Vehicle Safety. Vehicles used for transporting children shall be maintained as follows:

(a) Annual Safety Check. Each vehicle shall have a satisfactory annual safety check, completed by a trained individual, of at least: tires, headlights, horn, taillights, turn signals, brake lights, brakes, suspension, exhaust system, steering, windows, windshields and windshield wipers. A copy of a standard inspection report used by the Department or an equivalent shall be kept on file at the program or on the vehicle and should include evidence of any repairs and/or replacements that were identified as needed on the inspection report.

(b) Interior. Interior of a transportation vehicle shall be clean and in safe repair and free of hazardous items, objects and/or other non-essential items which could impede the children's access or egress from the vehicle or cause injury if the items were thrown about the vehicle as a result of a collision.

(c) Child Passenger Restraints. All children transported in a vehicle provided by or used by the program shall be secured in a child passenger restraining system or seat safety belt in accordance with current state and federal laws and regulations. The child passenger restraining system and seat safety belts shall be installed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's directions for such system and used in accordance with the manufacturer's directions with respect to restraining, seating or positioning the child being transported in the vehicle.

Driver. Whenever the program transports children for any reason, the driver of the vehicle shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age and possess a valid driver's license as required for the class of vehicle that the driver will be operating for the program.

CPR and First Aid Training. Either the driver or another Staff person present on the vehicle shall have current evidence of successful completion of a biennial training program in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a

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triennial training program in first aid offered by certified or licensed health care professionals and which dealt with the provision of emergency care to infants and children.

Additional Staff. When the program transports children for any reason, the following Staff:child ratios shall be maintained:

Driver + One (1) Staff Members
[The additional Staff shall be at least
eighteen (18) years of age or older]

When transporting three (3) or
more children under three years of age;

When seven (7) or more children under five (5) years
of age occupy vehicle;

When eighteen (18) or more children five (5) years of
age or older occupy the vehicle.

Driver + Two (2) Staff Members
[One (1) of the additional Staff members
least eighteen (18) years of age]

When eight (8) or more children under three
(3) years of age occupy the vehicle with shall be at
other children;

When more than twenty (20) children under five
years of age occupy the vehicle with other children.

Staffing Requirements When Transporting More Than Thirty-Six (36) Children.

1. When more than thirty-six (36) children under five (5) years of age occupy the vehicle, the Staff:child ratios as stated in Rules 591-1-1-.32(1) and 591-1-1-.32(2) shall be met.

2. When more than thirty-six (36) children five (5) years of age and older are transported with no children under the age of five (5) years, there shall be a minimum of two (2) Staff persons for the first thirty-six (36) children and there must be one additional Staff person for each additional twenty (20) children. This means a third Staff person would be required if transporting thirty-seven (37) to fifty-six (56) children five (5) years and older.

Parental Authorization. For routine transportation provided by the program or on behalf of the program, the child's Parent(s) shall provide written authorization for the transportation and specify routine pick-up location, routine pick-up time, routine delivery location, routine delivery time and the name of any person authorized to receive the child.

Transportation Plan. For all transportation conducted by the Program or on behalf of the Program, the following requirements shall be met:

(a) Program and Passenger Information. Each vehicle used to transport children must contain current information including the full names of all children to be transported and each child's pick-up location, pick-up time, delivery location, alternate delivery location if a Parent is not at home and name of person authorized to receive each child. In addition, the vehicle must contain current information identifying the Program's name and telephone number and the name of the driver of the vehicle.

(b) Emergency Medical Information. An emergency medical information record must be maintained in the vehicle for each child being transported. The emergency medical information record for each child must include a listing of the child's full name, date of birth, allergies, special medical needs and conditions, current prescribed medications that the child is required to take on a daily basis for a chronic condition, the name and phone number of the child's doctor, the local medical facility that the Program uses in the area where the Program is located and the telephone numbers where the Parent(s) can be reached.

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(c) Passenger Transportation Checklists. A passenger transportation checklist, provided by or in a format approved by the Department, shall be used to account for each child during transportation. A separate passenger checklist shall be used for each vehicle.

1. The first and last name of each child transported shall be documented on the passenger transportation checklist. Each child shall be listed individually; a sibling group shall not be listed as a single entry, for example, an entry of "Smith children" would be unacceptable.

2. The driver or other designated person shall immediately document in writing, with a check or other mark/symbol to account for each child listed on the passenger transportation checklist each time a child enters and exits the vehicle. The driver or other designated person shall document in writing with a different mark/symbol to account for each child listed on the passenger transportation checklist who was not present on the vehicle for any reason. An explanation shall be documented in writing whenever a child is transported to a field trip site but is not present on the return trip to the Program.

3. The driver or other designated Staff person shall also document in writing the departure/arrival times for all types of transportation on the passenger transportation checklist as follows:

(i) Home Transportation - Each time the vehicle departs from the Program, arrives at the location where any child is picked up or dropped off and when the vehicle returns to the Program.

(ii) Field Trip Transportation- Each time the vehicle leaves the Program, arrives at a field trip destination, leaves a field trip destination, and returns to the Program.

4. The Staff person on the vehicle responsible for keeping the passenger transportation checklist shall give the completed passenger transportation checklist to the Director or the Director's designated Staff person at the Program as set forth below:

(i) Immediately upon return to the Program at the completion of the trip once the vehicle has been checked; or

(ii) The next business day following the completion of the trip if the vehicle did not return to the Program at the end of the trip or if the Program was closed when the vehicle returned.

5. Passenger transportation checklists shall be maintained as Program records for one (1) year.

(d) Checking the Vehicle - To ensure that all children have been unloaded from transportation vehicles, regardless of whether the vehicle is equipped with a child safety alarm devices, the vehicle shall be thoroughly checked first by a designated Staff person who was present on the vehicle during the trip and then by a second designated Staff person, who may or may not have been present on the vehicle during the trip, to ensure that two checks of the vehicle have been completed.

1. The first check shall be conducted immediately upon unloading the last child at any location including, but not limited to, a field trip destination, arrival at the Program, and the last stop during transportation to home or school. The responsible person on the vehicle shall:

(i) Physically walk through the entire vehicle;

(ii) Visually inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior;

(iii) Sign the passenger transportation checklist(s), indicating all of the children have exited the vehicle; and

(iv) Give the passenger transportation checklist(s) to the second designated Staff person.

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2. The second designated Staff person shall conduct a check of the vehicle as stated in Rule 591-1-1-.36(7)(d)1.(i) through (iii) above. The second check shall be conducted immediately upon the completion of the first check of the vehicle. There shall be continuous watchful oversight of the vehicle between the first check and second check.

3. If a second designated Staff person is not available to conduct a second check of the vehicle, the driver should check the vehicle as stated in Rule 591-1-1-.36(7)(d)1.(i) through (iii) above and then report by phone to the Director or designated Staff person that the check has been completed and no children remain on the vehicle. (Possible circumstances include, but are not limited to: the Program has closed when the driver returns with the vehicle; the driver is the only Staff person on the vehicle at the last destination during home, school or field trip transportation; the driver takes the vehicle home at the end of the day.) The time and verification of such telephone contact shall be immediately documented and signed on the passenger transportation checklist(s) by the driver.

Supervision of Vehicles. A child shall never be left unattended in a vehicle.

S. Field Trips

Parental Permission. A program should obtain written permission from Parent(s) in advance of the child's participation in any field trip and such permission must be signed and dated by a Parent.

List of Trip Participants. A list of children and adults participating in the trip should be left at the program as well as be taken on the trip in the possession of the adult in charge of the trip.

Emergency Medical Information. Emergency medical information on each child to include allergies; special medical needs and conditions; current prescribed medications that the child is required to take on a daily basis for a chronic condition; the name and phone number of the child's doctor; the local medical facility that the program uses in the area where the program is located; and the telephone numbers where the Parent(s) can be reached should be left at the program as well as be taken on the trip in the possession of the adult in charge of the trip.

T. Required Reporting

The Administrator or designated person-in-charge should report or cause to be reported the following:

(a) Child Abuse, Neglect or Deprivation. 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.

(b) Communicable Diseases. Any cases or suspected cases of notifiable communicable diseases shall be reported to the local County Health Department as required by the rules of the Department of Human Resources regarding Notification of Disease, Chapter 290-5-3.

(c) Incident Reports. The following incidents should be reported to the Department within twenty-four (24) hours or the next work day:

1. Any death of a child while in the care of the program; and

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2. Any serious illness or injury requiring hospitalization or professional medical attention other than first aid of a child while in the care of the program.

U. Diapering (If applicable) CORE STANDARDS

Handwashing Sink. A hand washing sink with running heated water should be located adjacent to the diapering area.

Diaper Changing Surface. If diapers are changed on a diaper changing table/surface, the surface should be smooth, nonporous, and equipped with a guard or rails to prevent falls. Between each diaper change, the diaper change surface should be cleaned with a disinfectant and dried with a single-use disposable towel. Infants and children should not be left unattended while being diapered or having their clothes changed on the diaper changing surface.

Location of Diapering Area. The area used for diapering should not be used for food preparation. It must be clear of formulas, food, food utensils and food preparation items.

V. Safe Sleep Requirements (If applicable) CORE STANDARDS

Cribs. A crib that is safety approved in compliance with Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and American Society of Testing and Materials International (ASTM) safety standards should be provided for each infant. ("Infant" refers to any child under the age of twelve (12) months or any child who is under eighteen (18) months of age who is not walking.)

Crib Mattress. A mattress should be provided for each crib and shall be firm, tight-fitting without gaps, at least two inches (2") thick and covered with waterproof, washable material. Before a change of occupant, each mattress should be cleaned with a disinfectant.

Crib Sheet. Each crib should have only an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed daily or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant.

Infant Sleep Position. Staff should place an infant to sleep on the infant's back in a crib unless the program has been provided a physician's written statement authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant that includes how the infant shall be placed to sleep and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed.

Safe Sleep Environment. Staff should not place objects or allow objects to be placed in or on the crib with an infant such as but not limited to toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items. Staff should not attach objects or allow objects to be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, such as, but not limited to, crib gyms, toys, mirrors and mobiles.

Exemption Visit Health & Safety Monitoring Checklist

**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Exemption Visit Health & Safety Monitoring Checklist**



Arrival time:	Departure time:	Visit date:
Consultant name:		Phone #:
Program name:		EX-_____ (insert provider #)
Exemption Category:		EXMT-_____ (insert category #)
Street Address:		Phone:
City, Zip Code, State, County:		#
Administrator/Person-in-charge: Is this person typically on-site each day? ☐ Yes ☐ No		Present during visit: ☐ Yes ☐ No

General Operating Information
 *Complete this checklist AND an unlicensed program form

Is program currently operating?:	☐ Yes ☐ No	Comments:
*Is program operating within approved guidelines?: (i.e. ages served, hours/days of operation, etc.)	☐ Yes ☐ No	Comments:
*Is program operating at approved location?:	☐ Yes ☐ No	Comments:
Is approval letter <u>and</u> exemption notice from the Dept. posted in a prominent place near front entrance?		
☐ Yes ☐ No		
Are signed parent acknowledgement forms on file for each child? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
Do parents receive a program handbook? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
Is the email we have on file current? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
Are you receiving communications from the Department? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
Is the program accredited? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please list accrediting agency: _____		

Is the program following practices that align with CDC guidelines and in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order for programs during the COVID-19 health crisis.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Indicators

Staff: Child Ratios

Room or Area	Age Group	# Staff	# Children	State Ratios Met? (Y/N)	Activities/ Notes	Room or Area	Age Group	# Staff	# Children	State Ratios Met? (Y/N)	Activities/Notes
TOTALS						TOTALS					

Total number of non-care staff present (clerical, janitorial, etc.):

<u>Supervision</u> ☐ No children present		Observations/ Comments/ Notes	Plan of Improvement
- Staff members physically present with the children and properly supervising? ☐ Yes ☐ No - AND - Staff alert and able to intervene to prevent injuries? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->			

<u>Bathrooms</u> - Supplies ☐ Yes ☐ No - Cleanliness ☐ Yes ☐ No - Number of Toilets: _____ - Number of Sinks: _____ - Bathrooms in or adjacent to activity areas? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
<u>Children's Records</u> - Sign in/out logs signed by the parental authority or authorized representative (CAPS Policy 12.4.6.1) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A - Are children's enrollment records maintained on-site? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Are children's immunization records maintained (CAPS only)? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Emergency contact information available for each child & readily accessible to staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
<u>Criminal Background Checks</u> - CBC results on file for all staff on-site? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Is there anyone with only a national fingerprint check conducted by DECAL? ☐ Yes ☐ No - If so, is this staff supervised by staff with a Comprehensive Background check? ☐ Yes ☐ No - CBC one-day letter left on-site? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
<u>Diapering</u> ☐ N/A (no diapering) ☐ Not observed during visit - Clean, nonporous diapering surface with safety barrier? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Sink with warm, running water adjacent to diapering area? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Area not used for food preparation? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain-----> <u>Discipline</u> ☐ None observed - Appropriate disciplinary actions observed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain-----> - Written discipline policy? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Appropriate discipline policy? ☐ Yes ☐ No (not physically or emotionally harmful) - Policy communicated to staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
<u>Health & Hygiene</u> ☐ Not observed during visit		

- Sink(s), running water, soap and paper towels available? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Staff wash hands before and after toileting & before and after eating? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Children wash hands after toileting & before and after eating? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
Field Trips ☐ N/A (no field trips provided)		
- Written permission from parent/guardian? ☐ Yes ☐ No - List of participants? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Emergency medical information for each child on vehicle? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
Medication ☐ N/A (No medication dispensed)		
- Stored medication inaccessible to children? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Written permission from parent/guardian to dispense? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Document in writing when medication is dispensed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
Physical Plant - Certificate of Occupancy? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Fire Marshal approval/annual fire inspection? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Zoning approval? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Business license? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A - Premises free of serious health & safety hazards? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
Playgrounds/Equipment ☐ N/A (no playground or equipment) ☐ Not observed during visit - Outdoor equipment free of serious hazards? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Outdoor play area free of serious hazards? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Fence/barrier around outdoor play area? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		

<u>Policies and Procedures:</u> Does the program have a written policy regarding the following • The exclusion of children with contagious illness? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Notification of parents in the event their child becomes ill while at the facility? ☐ Yes ☐ No • The notification of all parents of enrolled children when a reportable contagious illness is present in the facility? ☐ Yes ☐ No • The prevention of and response to food and allergic reactions? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Emergency preparedness and response? ☐ Yes ☐ No • The handling and appropriate disposal of bodily fluids and storage of hazardous materials (soiled clothing and bedding)? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Has the program reported serious injuries/incidents? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		
<u>Safe Sleep</u> ☐ N/A (no infants) ☐ Not observed during visit • CPSC/ASTM Crib in good repair for each infant? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Cribs clear of objects? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Each crib has a firm, tight fitting mattress without gaps? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Each crib has an individual, tight fitting sheet? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Are infants placed on their back to sleep in an appropriate crib? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain----->		
<u>Staff Training</u> • At least one staff person present on site and on field trips with current first aid and CPR? ☐ Yes ☐ No • All Staff obtain First Aid and CPR training within 90 days of employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No • Staff trained in program policies and procedures? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain-----> • All Staff obtain Health & Safety Orientation Certificate within 90 days of employment? • Does staff receive on-going training? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, list type of training: ○		

Swimming & Water-Related Activities ☐ N/A (no pool/no swimming activities) - Pool area adequately fenced & secured? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Lifeguard certified and present? (if pool is on site) ☐ Yes ☐ No - Enough staff to safely supervise swimmers and non-swimmers? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain-----		
Transportation ☐ N/A (no transportation provided) - Written permission to transport from parent/guardian? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Emergency medical information for each child on vehicle? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Proper restraints used when transporting children? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not observed during visit - Procedures in place to transport children safely? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Each vehicle(s) has an annual safety inspection? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not observed during visit - Each vehicle(s) is in good/safe condition, clean and free of hazardous items? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not observed during visit - Documentation maintained of transportation which indicates that safety procedures are in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No - Additional staff provided to maintain adequate supervision during transportation? ☐ Yes ☐ No		

[illegible]

NOTES/OBSERVATIONS:

By signing this report I acknowledge that the report was discussed with me.

Director/Person-in-charge Signature_____

Printed name _____ Date_____

Specialist Signature_____ Date_____