



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

## Child Care Services

<b>CCS-400</b>  <b>INITIAL LICENSURE for Child Care Learning Centers</b>	<b>Effective Date: 12/1/2007</b>
	<b>Revised: 12/28/2010, 10/25/11, 3/9/12</b>
	<b>Revision Effective:10/25/11</b>

The following forms, letters, and/or reference materials linked to SharePoint:

1. Application for License, Parts A & B
2. ASU Licensure Packet Checklist
3. Capacity Determination Pages
4. Capacity Summary Page
5. Closure letter
6. Criminal Record Check (CRC) Acknowledgement Form
7. Status Affidavit
8. Disclosure Form
9. Facility Approval Form
10. Facility Alert Form
11. Inspection Master
12. Lead in Drinking Water checklist
13. Livescan Fingerprint Procedure flyer
14. Query Report (sample)
15. Sample letters
16. Part B 30-day determination letter
17. Inactive Status Letter

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

*Cross Reference/See Also: CCS-500, Changes of Ownership; CCS-600, Closures; CCS-2400, Status Changes*

### I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for receiving and processing applications for license or commission of child care learning center (CCLC) or group day care home (GDCH) applicants. It also applies to facilities that change status from a family day care home (FDCH) to a GDCH or CCLC at the same location or a different location. It also applies to facilities that change status from a GDCH to a CCLC or CCLC to GDCH at a new location. It applies to CCLC/GDCH facilities that change locations but remain the same type of facility (no status change).

### II. APPLIES TO

- A. Applicant Services Unit consultants
- B. ASU director
- C. Assigned administrative assistant

- D. Other child care consultants/regional directors as needed

### III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **40-Hour Director Training** – A course required by the rules and regulations for directors of new child care learning centers and group day care homes prior to receiving permission-to-operate. This includes FDCH providers changing status to a group day care center or child care learning center, but currently does not pertain to changes of ownership or location changes. Any proposed substitution for this course must be submitted via the variance/waiver process (CCS-2800).
- B. **Applicant Services Unit (ASU)** - CCS unit responsible for business with initial FDCH, GDCH and CCLC applicants. This includes location changes for existing licensed or registered facilities and status changes if provider is going from a family day care home (FDCH) to a group day care home (GDCH) or from a FDCH to a child care learning center (CCLC). (If a GDCH is changing to a CCLC, or CCLC to GDCH, at the same location the region will handle the status change process. See CCS-2400)
- C. **Applicant's Guide to Licensing** – Packet of licensing information available to potential applicants on the Bright for the Start website to guide them through the licensure process.
- D. **Application Part A** – Section of application for CCLC and GDCH license submitted initially, accompanied by the floor, site, and operation plans and applicable checklists, zoning approval, proof of LOM attendance, status affidavit and corporation/ownership/board/lease papers, if applicable.
- E. **Application Part B** – Second section of the application for license for only CCLCs and GDCHs; final step of the application process, submitted with remaining local approvals, proof of completion of an approved 40-hour director training, and the director's satisfactory fingerprint results.
- F. **ASU Query Report** – List of each ASU consultant's assigned applications showing documents received, actions taken, and current status. Consultants maintain this report for the current fiscal year. Consultants are required to update this report each Monday by 10:00 a.m. with the previous week's activities.
- G. **Floor Plan** - A detailed diagram of the interior of the building that designates each room and its use, exits, toilets and sinks, etc.
- H. **Inactive Application**– An application that cannot move to Part B approval based on a valid reason such as delays in obtaining local approvals, construction delays or extenuating circumstances. The application is moved to the Inactive Tab on the consultant's query pending submission of items needed to approve Part B.
- I. **Initial Licensing Study (ILS)** – A scheduled rule-by-rule inspection conducted after the Application for License, Parts A and B are approved. This is an announced visit.
- J. **Inspection Master**- Official document given to applicants denoting permission to operate (PTO) and requirement for paying license fee in order to obtain official license certificate.
- K. **Licensing Orientation Meeting (LOM)** – A one-day, detailed information session describing the application process for prospective CCLC and GDCH applicants. This meeting is a requirement for potential applicants, including providers changing status from a family day care home to a group day care home or child care learning center. The participants receive a certificate that is valid for two years.
- L. **Local Approvals** – Refers to local city or county requirements for businesses, such as fire and building inspections, zoning approvals, certificates of occupancy, sewer, water, and septic approvals, etc. Fire approvals may be under the jurisdiction of the local or the state fire marshal. Applicants must call the State Fire Marshal's office to determine who has jurisdiction.
- M. **Location Change** – When a currently licensed child care learning center or group day care home moves the existing business to a new address with the same management, staff, etc. ASU processes these differently in that the Licensing Orientation Meeting

(LOM) and 40-Hour Director Training are not required. A new license number will be issued and the history follows the provider and remains in the file (or is transferred to the new file). A record for the new location will be entered into the web portal prior to the ILS so that the new address is attached to the ILS visit. The previous eighteen months of report history is transferred to the new record in the web portal.

- N. Operation Plan** – A detailed written plan submitted by the applicant that includes the facility’s policies and procedures, forms, emergency plans, etc.
- O. Permission to Operate (PTO)** – Authorization for a new facility or new owner to operate prior to payment of the annual license fee and subsequent receipt of the actual license. The consultant grants PTO when the facility is in substantial compliance either after the initial licensing study (ILS) or a subsequent follow-up to the ILS. Consultants document PTO on the Inspection Master and leave a copy of this form with the facility at the conclusion of the ILS or follow-up visit (if in substantial compliance).
- P. Site Plan** –A detailed diagram of the building(s), playgrounds, and parking area that shows where they are located on the property. This should include a clear route to the playground from the building(s).
- Q. State File** - The official paper record of a facility maintained at the state office.
- R. Status Affidavit** – Certified Affidavit from the applicant stating that they are a United States citizen, legal permanent resident or otherwise qualified alien and lawfully present in the United States.

**IV. POLICY**

The policy of Bright from the Start is for the Applicant Services Unit (ASU) to process applications for license expediently and to determine substantial compliance with the rules and regulations prior to issuing PTO. ASU will also process all location changes for CCLC and GDCH providers.

**V. PROCEDURES**

**A. The Applicant will:**

- i. Obtain Applicant’s Guide by downloading it from the Bright from the Start website.
- ii. Attend Licensure Orientation Meeting, prior to submitting the Application for License Part A.
  - 1. Required for child care learning centers and group day care homes.
  - 2. Recommended but not required for location changes and changes of ownerships, particularly for programs that were originally licensed prior to 2004.
- iii. Submit Application Part A, which includes:
  - 1. Completed Application for License, Part A,
  - 2. Two copies of floor and site plans and the corresponding completed checklists,
  - 3. Operation plan and completed checklist,
  - 4. Copy of licensing orientation meeting certificate,
  - 5. Written zoning approval from the local agency with jurisdiction,
  - 6. Corporation papers, if applicable, to include the name reservation certificate, by-laws (if applicable), and articles of incorporation.
  - 7. Board information (if applicable), to include a list of board members and meeting minutes that authorized the establishment of the child care center.
  - 8. Lease agreement with landlord, if applicant does not own the building/property.
  - 9. Status Affidavit

**B. Applicant Services Unit receives the Application**

The assigned administrative assistant will:

1. Review the application packet for completeness and forward or retain as appropriate within five (5) business days of receipt.
  2. Enter application information into the web portal within five (5) business days of receipt, if the application is complete.
  3. Forward any completed records check applications to the CRC Unit.
  4. Verify inclusion of Application for License Part A, floor, site, and operation plans and completed checklists for each, licensing orientation meeting certificate, status affidavit, zoning approval, corporation papers (if applicable), board information (if applicable), and lease/purchase agreement (if applicable).
  5. If missing any of the above items,
    - i. Enter on Missing Applications Log.
    - ii. Return package to applicant with letter.
    - iii. File letter in "Missing Applications" notebook.
- b. If complete:
- i. Assign to ASU consultant by sending the consultant an e-mail notification of application assignment with attached assignment log.
  - ii. Mail the packet to the ASU consultant within five (5) business days.
- ii. Processing the Application. The ASU consultant will:
1. Check mail at least once a week, but more often if possible.
  2. Send an acknowledgement letter to the applicant within five (5) business days after receipt of the e-mail notification.
  3. Log application information on ASU query report and on monthly activity report for end of the month reports.
  4. Review Application Part A, zoning approval, and floor, site, and operation plans with applicable checklists within 30 business days of receipt of the physical application and send a determination letter to notify applicant of approvals or needed revisions.
    - i. If Part A is approved the consultant will mail the applicant the Part A approved letter.
    - ii. If Part A is not approved the consultant will mail the ASU not approved letter to the applicant giving them 30 business days to submit revisions. If revisions are not received by the deadline the file will be closed and the originals returned to the applicant along with a closure letter.
  5. Send acknowledgement of receipt letter to applicant within five (5) business days each time the applicant submits originals or revisions.
  6. Review submissions within 30 business days of receipt.
  7. Contact applicant as necessary to obtain additional information throughout the application review process in order to expedite the process.
  8. Within five (5) business days of Part A approval, the consultant will notify (via letter/e-mail/phone call) applicant they are now at Part B status and can submit application once it is complete and facility is ready for inspection.
  9. If Part A is approved and it is determined that the applicant cannot move to Part B status because they are in new construction phase or there are other extenuating circumstances which warrant, the applicant immediately moves to the "Inactive Tab" on the consultants query and

the consultant will obtain periodic updates, at least quarterly, while the applicant remains in inactive status. The consultant will mail the applicant an inactive status letter placing them in inactive status for up to one year. Contacts detailing the applicant’s status will be noted in the comment section of the consultant’s query. An anticipated date when Part B will be completed should be noted. Inactive status may be extended contingent on verifiable legitimate reasons. If there is no legitimate reason to maintain the file in inactive status a closure letter will be sent and the originals returned.

10. If Part B is not submitted within thirty (30) business days of Part A being fully approved the consultant will mail the applicant a Part B 30 DL requesting that Part B and supporting documentation be submitted within ten (10) calendar days or the application will be closed.
11. Review Part B within five (5) business days of receipt. This includes:
  - a. Application for License, Part B
  - b. All remaining approvals (fire, building, septic tank, vehicle inspection, etc.)
  - c. Satisfactory fingerprint results for the director.
  - d. Certificate for 40-hour director training (unless a location change) and copy of director’s employment application.
12. If Part B is submitted, but not approved, within five (5) business days of receipt the consultant will:
  - a. Contact the applicant by phone, e-mail or regular mail to request that additional or revised information be submitted within 30 business days and documents the action on their query.
  - b. If the revisions are not received within 30 business days of the request the consultant mails a Part B 30 DL requesting that the outstanding materials be submitted within 10 calendar days or the application will be closed.
  - c. If the applicant responds indicating that they are still in the process of obtaining local approvals and the approvals will be obtained within a six-month period the applicant will be moved to the “Inactive Tab” on the consultant’s query for a six-month period. The consultant will mail the applicant an inactive status letter placing them in inactive status for six months. The consultant will have monthly contact with the applicant to determine the applicant’s progress. Contacts detailing the applicant’s status will be noted in the comment section of the consultant’s query. An anticipated date that Part B will be completed should be noted at each contact. Inactive status may be extended contingent on verifiable legitimate reasons. If there is no legitimate reason to maintain the file in inactive status a closure letter will be sent and the originals returned.
  - d. Once the appropriate revisions are received the consultant follows the procedures beginning again at #11 above.
13. Notify applicant of approval of Part B by telephone contact and document call on query.
  - a. When approved:
    - i. Schedule phone conference to review the 28-page checklist.
    - ii. Conduct phone conference using the 28 -page checklist.
    - iii. Schedule initial licensing study with the applicant within 10 business days of approval of Part B, provided

applicant states they are prepared for the visit upon completion of phone conference. Extension of this visit date can be granted if requested by applicant.

14. Update query report, monthly activity report and calendar (via KOALA TIME) each time there is a review and/or correspondence or other contact, but no later than 10:00 a.m. each Monday.
  15. Conduct an on-site technical assistance visit for an existing or completed building, or an office conference if a visit cannot be made, when revised materials cannot be approved on the second submission of the floor, site, and/or operation plan.
- iii. Closing the Application. The ASU consultant will:
1. Close the application when there is no response from the applicant within the required response times stated in the ASU Not Approved or Part B 30 Day Determination letter **OR** When the applicant requests voluntary closure and withdraws the application.
  2. Send the originals back to the applicant.
  3. Move the applicant to the “Closed” tab on the query report.
  4. Update record in web portal in ‘view/update application’ section with closed status and documents in notes tab reason for closure.
- iv. Conducting the Initial Licensing Study. The ASU consultant will:
1. Evaluate compliance with rules and regulations and documents severity for core rules.
  2. Complete the compliance determination chart for each ILS visit and/or follow-up.
  3. Measure child care rooms and outdoor play space.
  4. Discuss and document any limitations on inspection report cover page, capacity tab, Capacity Summary Page, ILS cover letter and Facility Alert form.
  5. Ensure applicant reviews and signs Lead in Drinking Water Checklist and the director completes the Criminal Record Check Acknowledgement Form.
  6. Provide technical assistance, as needed.
  7. Provide copies of Georgia Early Learning Standards (GELS) and the Parent’s and Teacher’s Activity Guides, as available (also available on DECAL website).
  8. Conduct exit conference and jointly develops Plan of Improvement (POI) with provider.
  9. Give permission-to-operate (PTO) if in substantial compliance (only low risk core rule citations; no medium or higher risk citations permitted).
  10. Discuss license fee payment process.
  11. Schedule a follow-up visit within 10 business days if PTO is not issued. Note: A date more than 10 business days can be established if extenuating circumstances exist. Consultant will document on query the reason for no PTO. Correspondence e-mail to Unit Director and Lead Consultant stating why PTO was denied and the plan for the follow-up.
  12. Schedule an office conference/telephone conference, if needed, to discuss noncompliance and plan of improvement.
  13. Will change status to Licensed in the web portal in View/Update Application within two (2) business days of issuing PTO. After updating, check View Provider to ensure the facility is listed as Open. NOTE: For changes of location, consultant will also manually close the previous location under View Provider.

14. Will e-mail the inspection master denoting PTO to the ASU Lead Consultant within five (5) business days.
  15. The provider has 30 calendar days to pay the annual license fee beginning the date the status is changed.
  16. When the license fee is paid, the new license will be automatically e-mailed to the provider per the license fee process.
- v. Processing the Initial Licensing Packet. The ASU consultant will:
1. Process and complete the initial licensing packet within 20 business days of issuing PTO, using the ASU Licensure Packet Checklist to ensure all items are included.
  2. Update the web portal:
    - a. Search by name and address to locate the correct facility to ensure that no duplicate entries are made in the web portal.
    - b. Enter all remaining facility information in the appropriate tabs of the application record.
    - c. Archive visit within 10 business days of the initial licensing study when permission-to-operate (PTO) is granted.
  3. Complete a cover letter.
  4. Send an e-mail to the assigned administrative assistant and cc: unit director with cover letter and license request attached.
  5. Complete a closure memo for the former location when a facility changes location. Closure memos are e-mailed to the appropriate regional director, lead regional consultant and the regional consultant. E-mail is also copied to ASU director, lead consultant and assigned administrative assistant. A copy of the closure memo is submitted with initial licensing packet.
  6. Mail the processed ILS packet to the ASU director upon completion.
  7. Move the facility to the licensed tab on the ASU query report and adds the facility to the PTO tab on the monthly activity report.
  8. Document that the ILS packet has been processed on KOALA TIME calendar.
- vi. The ASU director will:
1. Review the packet using the ILS review form within 15 business days.
  2. Return the packet to the administrative assistant upon completion of review and confirmation that license fee payment has been received by the Department. (Note: If payment is not received from the provider adverse action may be pursued according to policy CCS-200.)
- vii. The administrative assistant will:
1. E-mail the cover letter, measurement pages, capacity summary page and scanned floor/site plans to the facility (Note: Documents must be sent as PDF files).
  2. Forward ILS packet and materials to the regional administrative assistant, who, within 15 business days, sets up the state file and forward worker file to the assigned regional consultant.

## **VI. COMMENTS**