



DATE: May 7, 2021

TO: Licensed Family Day Homes, Certified Preschools, Religious Exempt Child Day Centers, Family Day Systems, Voluntarily Registered Family Day Homes, Unlicensed/Unregistered Subsidy Approved Family Day Homes and Child Day Centers, and Filing Exempt Programs

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director, Division of Licensing Programs, Department of Social Services
Jenna Conway, Chief School Readiness Officer, Department of Education

RE: Transition of Child Care Programs from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education on July 1, 2021

This memo is intended to update child care providers on the upcoming transition of child care programs from the Department of Social Services (VDSS) to the Department of Education (VDOE), effective July 1, 2021. This memo describes what will and will not change as a result of the transition.

Questions regarding the transition may be directed to earlychildhood@doe.virginia.gov. More information about VDOE's efforts to build a unified early childhood system are available [here](#).

Overview

In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly passed [legislation](#) directing the Board of Education to establish a unified public-private system for early care and education, administered by the Department of Education (VDOE). This legislation effectively establishes the VDOE as the single point of accountability for school readiness in the Commonwealth.

What does this mean for child care programs on July 1, 2021?

Authority for child care programs will transition from the Department of Social Services (VDSS) to VDOE on July 1, 2021. Specifically,

- VDOE will regulate, inspect, and monitor all licensed, registered, and regulated child care and early education providers.
- Child care licensing staff will become VDOE employees.
- VDOE will become "Lead Agency" for the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the primary source of funding for the Child Care Subsidy Program and quality improvement initiatives. As Lead Agency, VDOE will oversee and set policy for the [Child Care Subsidy Program](#).

- Communication regarding child care licensing and child care subsidy will come from VDOE offices.

What won't change on July 1, 2021?

- **All policies and regulations related to child care licensing and the Child Care Subsidy Program will transition to VDOE as-is.** This means that child care providers will **not** be expected to meet any new standards on July 1.
- Licenses, registrations, and exemption approvals issued by VDSS will remain in effect until their renewal date, at which time programs that are eligible for renewal will receive a VDOE-issued license, registration, or approval. Providers in good standing are not at risk of losing their status.
- Providers will remain with their current licensing region.
- VDSS will continue to administer the Child Care Subsidy Program via its network of 120 local departments of social services. Families will still go to their local social services office to apply for assistance and providers will still apply to become a [subsidy vendor](#) through VDSS

Will there be changes to child care regulations in the future?

- **There will be no changes to child care policies and regulations on July 1, 2021.** Over the course of the next year, the VDOE will review all early childhood policies, regulations, and procedures, including child care licensing and child care subsidy, in partnership with the [Early Childhood Advisory Committee](#) and the Board of Education. All licensed or regulated providers will be notified of the revision process and have opportunities to provide input. Proposed changes to licensing regulations will be brought to the Board in late 2021 or early 2022. Providers will be given advance notice of any adopted changes in licensing regulations or inspection processes.

Additional information is forthcoming as we get closer to the transition on July 1, 2021. Keep an eye out for information on a statewide webinar focused on the child care transition and the revised child day center regulations later this spring, with opportunities for Q&A. We thank you for the essential service you provide to children and families throughout the Commonwealth.