

# Oregon Child Care Licensing

*Ensuring Health and Safety for Young Children in Care*



## Why Licensing Matters for Safety and Quality

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DELIC uses national, research based best practices<sup>1</sup> for licensing requirements to help ensure children are in safe and healthy environments while in child care settings. Licensed programs ensure enough adults are present to safely supervise children, keep them safe, and give them the attention they need to support children's development and learning.

- **Staff to child ratios, group size requirements, and supervision** help ensure a minimum level of safety and quality in care settings while children get enough one-on-one attention from their teacher. Trained caregivers who received ongoing support and feedback through monitoring are more likely to promote the physical and mental health, safety, and cognitive development of children in their care.

## CCLD's Role: Ensuring Safety and Compliance

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The Child Care Licensing Division (CCLD) ensures the health and safety of children in licensed child care settings. CCLD serves as a consumer protection for families when selecting child care. To protect children key safety strategies include:

- **Investigating complaints and conducting tandem visits** with the Office of Trainings, Investigations and Safety (OTIS) to investigate allegations of child abuse or neglect.
- **Monitoring child care settings** for foundational health and safety licensing requirements.
- **Issuing and renewing licenses** to ensure ongoing compliance.
- **Providing technical assistance** to programs to improve safety and quality.
- **Conducting background checks** on all adults in contact with children while in child care settings.

## Why Licensing Matters for Business

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A recent paper from NAEYC shows that while it may seem like reducing staff-to-child ratios, group size limits, or qualification requirements could address workforce shortages. Studies show that deregulation often increases risks to children's safety and drives up operating costs.<sup>2</sup>

- **Increased Risk and Insurance Costs:** Reducing standards increases safety risks, which leads to higher liability insurance premiums. As seen in other states, this adds financial pressure on providers and reduces the availability of child care.
- **Educator Burnout and Turnover:** Relaxing safety standards such as ratios can lead to educator burnout, further exacerbating workforce shortages by increasing turnover, which in turn reduces the quality of care and stability for children.

Instead of reducing regulations, investing in workforce support and retention programs is key to ensuring a strong, qualified, and sustainable workforce that can meet the needs of children and families.



## Federal Compliance: Meeting CCDF Standards

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (CCDBG Act, as amended)<sup>3</sup> is the main federal law governing child care programs for low-income working families. CCDF (Child Care Development Fund) comes from the CCDBG.

DELC uses these funds to subsidize the child care expenses of eligible children and to improve the overall quality, safety and supply of child care. For a state (lead agency) to use these funds to subsidize the child care expenses of eligible children, they must have in effect child care licensing requirements to improve the quality and supply of child care.

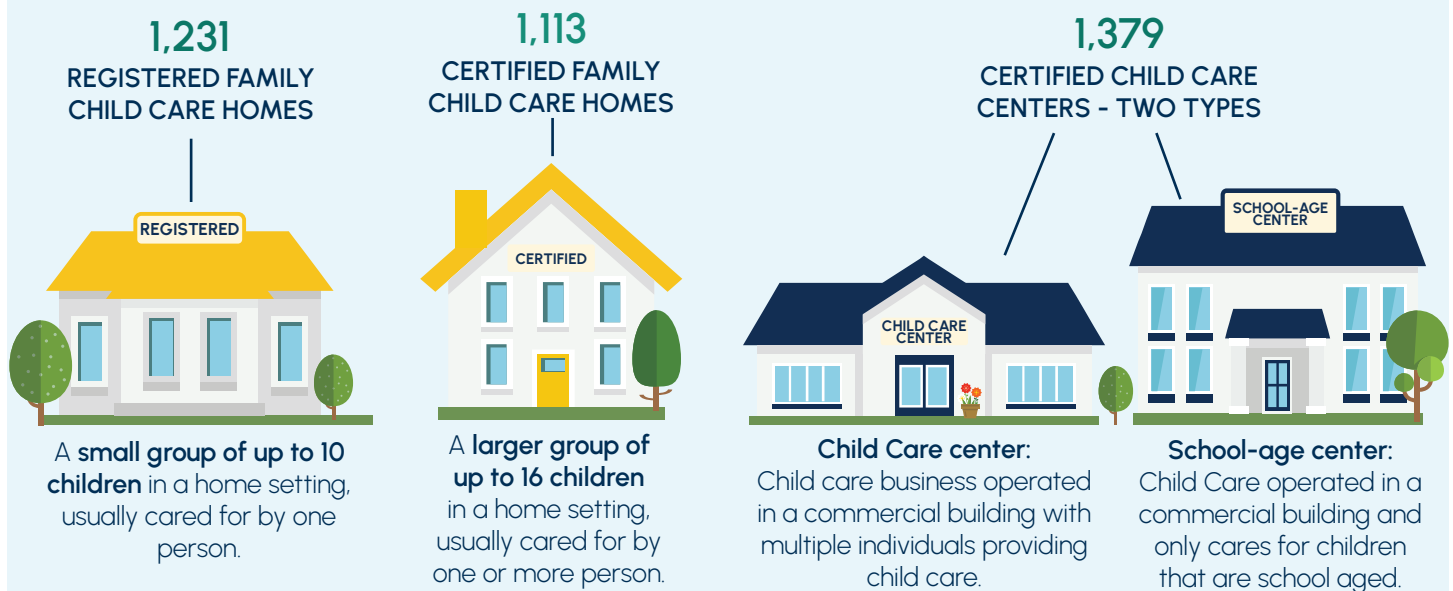
The lead agency must:

- Conduct criminal background checks.
- Investigate complaints
- Establish health and safety requirements.
- Set standards for group size limits (by age group), child-to-caregiver ratios (by age group), and qualification requirements for providers.
- Ensure providers comply with fire, health and safety requirements.
- Provide the public with information about licensing inspections and monitoring reports.

## Types of Child Care

DELC licenses multiple types of child care settings to build the supply of child care.

As of October 2024



Coming in 2025: Outdoor Nature Based Programs

## Contact

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<sup>1</sup> National Association for Regulatory Administration, Child Care Aware, Caring for our Children

<sup>2</sup> [2024naeycderegulationresource\\_final.pdf](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/ccdbgact.pdf>