

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**Department of Early Education and Care**

**SELF-ASSESSMENT**

As a Family Child Care Educator you play a very important role in the lives of young children. Health and safety is the foundation on which you will build your program. The checklist below has been designed for you to use as a tool to review your indoor and outdoor space and to assist you in complying with additional regulatory requirements. This checklist will assist you in preparing for the licenser's visit to your home.

**Indoor Space**

The indoor space must be kept clean, safely maintained, well-ventilated, well-lit and of sufficient size for the children served, and must encourage play and learning.

- Do you have enough indoor space for the total number of children in your care including your own? (150 square feet for 1-2 children, 225 for 3-6 children, 35 square feet per child for 7-10 children.)
- Exits.
  - Do you have at least two, separate hazard free exits?
  - If you have a basement that will be licensed for child care, are there two means of egress directly to the outside? (One means of egress may be the stairs to the first floor.)
  - Do you have exit signs posted in rooms that have direct access to the outdoors?
- Do you have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors installed in your home in accordance with state fire department guidelines?
- Is the child care space, inside and out, free of peeling/flaking paint and/or broken plaster?
- Do you have well water?
  - If your water is from a well and not a town water supply, do you have evidence of a well water test from a Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection approved lab indicating that your water meets Drinking Water Standards?
- Are windows accessible to children securely screened, barricaded, or opened from the top?
- Have you verified that all potentially hazardous materials are not accessible to children: These may include such things as:
  - a. Kitchen: cleaning materials, sharp knives and tools, plastic bags, plastic wrap boxes with serrated edges, matches/lighters, thumbtacks, batteries, "junk drawer";
  - b. Playroom/Toy room: small toys, choking hazards, toys clean/disinfected;
  - c. Bathroom: cleaning materials including aerosols, razors, mouthwash, shampoos, cosmetics, and medications. Electrical appliances (toothbrushes, curling irons, shavers, hair dryers) are not plugged in near sink;
  - d. Bedrooms: cosmetics, perfumes, deodorants, loose change, water beds;

- ❑ Heating Sources – Have all radiators, hot water pipes, coal/wood stoves, gas-on-gas stoves (used for heating), pellet stoves and fireplaces been barricaded or made inaccessible to children? PLEASE NOTE PORTABLE SPACE HEATERS ARE PROHIBITED.
  - ❑ All fossil burning stoves such as wood, pellet and coal stoves etc. must meet all applicable local and state codes. Do you have the appropriate approval documentation? (see the regulations/policy for more detailed information)
- ❑ Is the room temperature in rooms occupied by children maintained at a minimum of 65 degrees? Do you take appropriate measures to protect children from health risks associated with excessive heat?
- ❑ Is your refrigeration and storage for food between 32 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit? Do you have a refrigerator thermometer to verify this temperature?
- ❑ Is the water temperature less than 120 degrees Fahrenheit?
- ❑ Are the equipment, materials and furnishings, toys and games appropriate to the ages and needs of children enrolled?
  - ❑ Are they sturdy, safely constructed and installed, non-tippable, flame retardant, easily cleaned and free from lead paint, protruding nails, rust, or other hazards.
- ❑ Do you have sufficient and appropriate napping items for the number of children in care such as a mat, cot, sofa, porta-crib, or playpen, cribs, beds?
  - ❑ Is there adequate space as required by regulation between each napping item?
  - ❑ Is there sufficient lighting for quiet activities for children who don't sleep and supervision?
  - ❑ Are infants placed on their backs for sleeping?
  - ❑ Are infants in an individual crib, portacrib, playpen or bassinet?
  - ❑ Are the crib mattresses fitted with clean coverings and do not contain head entrapments?
  - ❑ Are slats on the cribs no more than 2 3/8 inches apart?
  - ❑ Are cribs, porta-cribs, playpens or bassinets used for sleeping infants under 12 months free from comforters, stuffed animals or other soft, padded materials?
- ❑ Are all unused electrical outlets within the reach of children, younger than school age children, made inaccessible by use of a safety device or covering that prevents access to the receptacle openings?
- ❑ Do your stairways have handrails?
  - ❑ Are all stairways well-lit and hazard free?
  - ❑ Are all indoor and outdoor open stairways of four stairs or more (used by children younger than school age) protected so that children cannot fall through the open side?

- Do you have gates for all stairways if you care for children under the age of three (see the regulations for more detailed information)
- First Aid materials: Do you have the following in one location: adhesive tape, instant cold pack, gauze pads, gauze roller bandages, non-latex disposable gloves, band aids, thermometer, tweezers and scissors, and CPR mouth guard. Do you also have the emergency cards information if taking the children off the premises?
- Pets: Are the pets appropriate for the children in care?
  - Are all pets free from disease and parasites and licensed and/or vaccinated as required by law?
  - Are all pets kept in a safe and sanitary manner?
  - Are all litter boxes inaccessible to children?
  - If you have reptiles, are they inaccessible to children?
- Firearms: If you have firearms in your home:
  - Are they kept unloaded?
  - Are they kept either in a locked cabinet or equipped with a trigger lock and stored in a safe and secure place inaccessible to children?
  - Is ammunition stored separately from the firearms and inaccessible to children?
  - Have you notified parents in writing of the existence of a firearm in the home?
  - Did you notify EEC of the existence of a firearm?
- Do you have the following information posted in an area easily visible to parents, educators and visitors? (Please note that if you are utilizing a cell phone, 911 does not connect you with local authorities. Please plan an alternative method of compliance.)
  - "Call 911" reminder, telephone number and address of the program, telephone number of the Poison Control Center, name and telephone number of the emergency back-up person.
  - A list of all emergency or life saving medications, including but not limited to epinephrine auto injectors, inhalers and anti-seizure medications, that specifies to which child they belong.
  - A list of allergies and/or other emergency medical information provided by the parent for each child.
  - Current EEC license or approval.

## Outside Play Space

- ❑ Do you have an outdoor play area, or have access to an outdoor play area, of at least 75 square feet per child who is outside at any one time?
- ❑ Is your outdoor space hazard free?
  - ❑ The outdoor space must not have direct access to any of the following:
    - ❑ a. A busy street
    - ❑ b. Potentially hazardous materials: yard tools, chemicals, ladders, lawn mowers, junk, animal feces
    - ❑ c. Standing water including lakes, rivers, brooks, wetlands, drainage ditches
    - ❑ d. Are your play structures, sandboxes, outside toys clean and free of hazards such as splinters or exposed screws?
    - ❑ e. Any other hazard near or in your play space (rail road tracks, steep drop-offs, etc.)
  - ❑ Is the outdoor play space appropriate for the age group served?
  - ❑ Does the space provide for both direct sunlight and shade?
  - ❑ Is the outdoor space covered with dangerously harsh, abrasive or toxic materials?
  - ❑ Any playground equipment installed **after January 2010** and all playground equipment in homes first **licensed after January 2010**, must have playground use zones that are covered with an adequate depth of an impact absorbing material in accordance with EEC policy. Pea gravel and wood chip nuggets must not be used in areas used by infants and toddlers. Does this pertain to your outdoor play area?
- ❑ Do you have a deck that is used by children? If yes, is it hazard free? (see regulations for detailed information)
- ❑ Swimming pools
  - ❑ Is your pool used by child care children treated, cleaned, maintained and supervised according to sound health and safety practices and state and local guidelines and regulations?
  - ❑ If your pool inaccessible to children?
  - ❑ If utilizing a wading pool, is it emptied immediately after each use and sanitized between uses?
  - ❑ If a pool is used, is there an adult present who is immediately available and aware of the pump location and able to turn it off?
  - ❑ Is there a second adult on the premises available to assist in the event of an emergency?
  - ❑ Are hot tubs, whether indoors or outdoors, inaccessible to children?

**You also must have the following documents available for review at the time of your visit:**

- Evidence of current certification in both basic first aid and CPR for infants and children. (Please note: for EEC purposes, CPR certification is only valid for one year from the date of issuance.)
- A copy of written information that is given to parents prior to enrollment, as required by regulation 606 CMR 7.08(6) [ Note: If you plan on using the EEC Parent Handbook to fulfill this requirement, you must have a copy of the handbook with your program-specific information available for the Licensor to review] A copy of the EEC Parent Handbook is available at [www.mass.gov/EEC](http://www.mass.gov/EEC).
- Forms to record the information required in children's records by regulation 606 7.04(7). If you plan on using or are using the Family Child Care Enrollment packet from the EEC website to fulfill this requirement, check this box.  These forms are available at [www.mass.gov/EEC](http://www.mass.gov/EEC).
- If you plan on or are utilizing a volunteer in your program, please have a written plan that speaks to the requirements of 606 7.03(7)(a-d).
- Evidence of an emergency evacuation plan.

**If you are currently licensed and are caring for children, you must additionally have the following documents available for review at the time of the visit:**

- Evidence of the required professional development hours.
- Evidence of medication administration training, if administering medication to children.
- Evidence of required files/materials to review for children in care, approved assistants, attendance, medication administration, evacuation logs and smoke detector logs.
- Evidence of a written transportation plan.

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS:**

**NEW TRAINING**

- Do you have a copy of the new regulations?
- Did you take the medication administration training?
- Have you taken training on USDA Nutrition/ Choking hazards?
- Have you taken Safe Sleep training?
- Do you know how to find the Professional Development Calendar on EEC website?
- Do you have a training plan for the next year (ten hours required annually)?

## **ORAL HEALTH**

- Do children brush their teeth at the program?
- Are toothbrushes labeled with names?
- Where are the toothbrushes stored?

## **INTERACTIONS**

- Have you completed the Interactions Self Assessment? This form is available at [www.mass.gov/EEC](http://www.mass.gov/EEC).

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

- Do you currently use any progress reports with families?
- Do you document ongoing observations of children?
- Do you have any assessment tools to help you with your reports?

## **CURRICULUM**

- How do you plan your day?
- What types of daily activities are planned for your program?
- How does your environment and the materials used reflect the needs of individual children's developmental goals (age appropriate)?
- Are the materials accessible to the children to make choices?
- Do you have individual places for children's belongings?
- Are there opportunities for 60 minutes of physical activity planned for each day?

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Do you transport children to and from school?
- If yes, have you reviewed the 7-D policy for school transportation?
- Do you transport for field trips?
- Do you hold a current and valid driver's license, registration, and liability insurance?

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

- Do you have a plan to conduct enrollment meetings, and promote on-going parent communications and conferences?