

Applying for a DHS Child Care Center License

- Applicable Hawaii Administrative Rules:
 - Chapter 892.1, Licensing of Group Child Care Centers and Group Child Care Homes;
 - Chapter 895, Licensing of Infant and Toddler Child Care Centers; or
 - Chapter 896, Licensing of Before and After School Child Care Facilities (dependent on the type of license that application is for).
- Applicants must complete the following:
 - A signed department application form and supplemental information, including
 - Information about the legal authority of the organization that will be operating the center,
 - A listing of center staff & volunteers with the times and days that they work, and
 - A certification that staff and volunteers have the required education and experience for the position held;
 - Written operational policies;
 - Verification that the facility meets the applicable codes of the County, including:
 - zoning,
 - building,
 - electrical,
 - plumbing, and
 - fire
 - Satisfactory background checks for center staff, including:
 - Adult abuse/neglect history check,
 - Child abuse/neglect history check, and
 - Criminal history check, including a federal fingerprint check.
- Upon receipt of the completed application and process indicated above, a Child Care Licensing Worker will conduct a licensing visit to inspect the entire facility in accordance with the applicable DHS licensing rules. The licensing visit inspection includes:
 - Children's files, including registration, emergency contact information, health records;
 - Nutrition review for centers providing food service who are not participating in the federal USDA Child and Adult Care Food program;
 - Health sanitation inspection, if meals are prepared on site;
 - Satisfactory County fire inspection report;
 - Disaster plan for emergencies;
 - Center staff must have medical clearances, including physical examination and TB;
 - Center staff must meet educational and experience requirements for the position held at the center;
 - Written operational policies that ensure the health and safety of children in care (e.g. transportation provisions, program provisions/goals, daily

activities, accident prevention policies and practices, emergency care provisions, provisions for administering medication, admissions of sick or special needs children, written health policies for staff, health consultation provisions);

- Have at least one caregiver on site with a current certificate in first aid and child CPR at all times during operational hours and a first-aid kit;
 - No environmental hazards that jeopardize the health and safety of children in care.
- Any deficiencies cited during the application and licensing process must be corrected prior to issuance of a license.
 - Once it is determined that the applicant is in full compliance with the licensing rules, the Child Care Licensing Unit will issue a license to operate a child care center.

On-going licensure:

- Once licensed, any significant changes that occur in the child care center must be reported to the Child Care Licensing Worker.
- Licenses are valid for 1 year for those providers licensed for less than 4 years, and then may be valid for 2 years if been licensed longer than 4 years.
- During the 2-year licensing period, at least two visits would be conducted per period, one “biennial” visit and one “off-year” visit.

Complaints:

- Any concerns about a child care center or its employees may be reported to the appropriate DHS child care licensing unit [here](#).
- The DHS child care licensing unit will determine whether there is a child care law or licensing rule violation that needs to be investigated.
- If an investigation is warranted, the child care licensing unit shall conduct an unannounced visit to the provider’s home or child care facility.
- If a complaint allegation concerns the abuse or neglect of a child, please contact the Department’s Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at (808) 832-5300 for Oahu and Toll Free number from neighbor islands: 1-800-494-3991.
 - The Department’s child care licensing staff will conduct a joint investigation with the Child Welfare Services staff.