The “OCCL”

The staff within the Office of Child Care Licensing (“OCCL”) takes its Mission Statement very seriously. We consider it vital to our mission to partner with you, the child care centers and child care group homes we regulate and serve. From our dedicated Support Staff who answer the phones and process your licensing fees to the Surveyors who monitor for compliance and offer technical assistance, we are committed to providing you, the child care workforce, with accurate information and excellent customer service.

Our Licensing Surveyors have walked in your shoes at some point in their careers. They understand many of the challenges you face in our chosen profession, and tremendously value the positive impact you have in the lives of children in regulated care in our State.

The OCCL is struggling with our budget and a staffing deficit of 12 positions Statewide. That being said, the staff of the OCCL continues to remain diligent about doing our best to serve you and keep up with the workload - just as you are doing in the facilities. We are all finding that we must be more efficient as we continue to do more and more with fewer resources.

The OCCL appreciates partnering with you, the child care community, to better the experience of each child in regulated care in Arizona.

Keep up the good work!

New User-Friendly Website Format for OCCL

Have you noticed OCCL’s newly improved website? Much effort has been put into making the OCCL Website more user-friendly. Icons and “buttons” will direct the user to areas of interest.

You will find that important new information will be highlighted for your ease in locating what’s new from Licensing. Further updates are planned, so keep checking in as we expand and enhance information designed specifically for child care providers, parents, potential child care facility owners and other OCCL partners. Take time to check out our new look!
Empower Pack Celebrates Its First Birthday!

The OCCL’s Empower Pack Program, in partnership with the Department of Health Services’ Office of Public Health, has recently celebrated its first birthday! To date, more than 2000 licensed child care programs and certified small group child care homes have taken advantage of the 50% discount of their licensing and certification fees by enrolling in the Empower Pack Program.

Empower Pack makes sense for our next generation in the areas of physical activity, nutrition, and smoking cessation. The 10 Empower Pack standards reflect our State’s and Nation’s focus on concerns regarding obesity and healthy lifestyles. Limiting screen time in front of a computer or TV paired with planned physical activity opportunities encourage our children to be active. Family-style meals facilitate conversation between staff and children who are seated together for meals while children make independent, or with the assistance of a staff member, choices about what and how much they desire to eat.

Happy Birthday Empower Pack!

New Child Care Center Regulations Effective 9-30-10

The new Child Care Center Regulations became effective 9-30-2010. More than 1500 child care staff throughout the State took advantage of the OCCL’s New Rules Training which highlighted many of the changes. This new rule set for child care centers is generally considered to be more efficient and less regulatory. Child Care Licensing Surveyors and Staff will continue to provide technical assistance regarding the changes during inspections. As always, each of the 3 Regional OCCL Offices has a Surveyor-on-Duty each day to answer questions you might have, if you are unable to reach your assigned Surveyor.

Additionally, forms the OCCL provides for child care providers have been updated to reflect the rule changes. Each form has a revision date at the bottom of the form in order for you to check that you have the most current version of a particular document. Your use of the majority of OCCL’s forms is not required by rule, but is provided as a tool to assist child care centers and homes maintain compliance.

Child Care Group Homes Rules Review Underway

A review of the OCCL’s Child Care Group Home regulations is currently underway.

Child Care Group Home providers, and OCCL and Department staff have been painstakingly reviewing all of the current rules with the end goal being a rule set that is both efficient and effective.

Watch the OCCL Website for updates regarding the continued work on the Child Care Group Home regulations.
OCCL Staff Excel!

Our own Licensing Surveyor Flossie Wagner was awarded Leader of the Semi-Annual for the Division of Licensing Services within the Department of Health Services. Flossie heads up the Systems Analysis Committee which is responsible for developing, and assisting with implementing, all of the policies, procedures and forms for OCCL. Flossie also tracks your Licensing Fee dollars; and, manages a caseload on top of that! you will understand why she was awarded this honor!

Congratulations Flossie!

The Division’s Receptionist Lupita Gonzales, a member of the OCCL, took away the honor of Employee of the Semi-Annual for our Division. If you have ever met or spoken with Lupita, you will understand why she was awarded this honor!

Congratulations Lupita!

The OCCL’s Empower Pack Program’s Implementation Team was a finalist for the Team of the Semi-Annual! Congratulations to each of this Team’s participants for pulling together the amazing Empower Pack Program in short order!

Are You Ready?

Though not required by rule, OCCL has developed a resource to assist your center or home with Emergency Preparedness. Advance planning and being prepared to successfully handle any emergency that might arise at your facility will do much to lessen the stress of the situation. Use this resource as a tool to better prepare your facility!

http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/ccc_forms/emergency.pdf

Parent Training Video

OCCL has recently completed a video to assist parents in knowing what to look for and expect when enrolling their children in regulated and licensed child care centers and certified child care group homes in Arizona. Pass the word to parents enrolled in your center or home about this new resource!

http://www.azdhs.gov/med ia.htm#OCCL

Immunizations Update

Child care providers now have the opportunity to access enrolled children’s immunizations through the Arizona State Immunization’s Information System (ASIIS). (No more asking parents for copies of their child’s immunization records and then waiting to receive those records!) Check out the ASIIS website today!

https://www.asiis.state.az.us

From cribs to toddler toys to playground equipment, find the latest information on recalls issued by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Make it a practice to check their website regularly at:

http://www.cpsc.gov
Rule Change Regarding Capacity Changes

A rule change regarding Child Care Licensing Fees for License or Certificate Modifications involving changes to licensed capacities from one capacity fee level to another has been initiated. The rule requires an additional fee be assessed when a facility desires to increase their licensed capacity to a new fee level. The fee will be based on the dollar amount difference between the facility’s current fee level and the new desired level. The Fee will be prorated by the number of months remaining on the facility’s 3-year license. Your Surveyor may assist you in determining what your fee will be for increasing your capacity. The Empower Pack Program’s 50% discount for this Change of Capacity Licensing Fee will be available to those facilities that are registered with the Empower Pack Program.

Note: If the change of capacity does not result in a shift to a new capacity level, no fee will be assessed.

Licensed capacity levels are:

- 5-10 children
- 11-59 children
- 60+ children

Information may be accessed here: http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/cc_apps.htm
Register for Empower Pack here: http://www.theempowerpack.org

Senate Bill 1315 Efficiency Study Completed

As a result of SB 1315 passed in Arizona’s 2010 Legislative Session, the OCCL was required, in part, to participate in an efficiency study to determine how the Office might improve and streamline its processes as it goes about the business of regulating child care centers and child care group homes in Arizona.

The Auditors spent many months conducting the study. Their work included many staff interviews and observing and evaluating the Office’s policies and procedures in action.

The Final Report was submitted to the State Legislature and Governor in early February 2011. Though OCCL was commended on a number of its previously enacted process improvements, the Office will be reviewing the Study to better determine where and how we might become even more efficient.