

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

1. What is the Bureau of Child Care Licensing?

The Bureau of Child Care Licensing (BCCL) monitors the health, safety and well-being of children in child care centers and child care group homes by regulating, establishing and enforcing appropriate rules. BCCL provides consumer education and technical assistance and training to child care staff. BCCL also ensures compliance with regulatory requirements by investigating unlicensed facilities and taking enforcement actions that are necessary to ensure compliance with the standards that are set forth by the State of Arizona.

2. What types of licensed child care are available?

The types of child care available are child care group homes and child care centers. A child care group home must be in the provider's own residence and care is provided for no more than 10 children (ages infant through school-age) for compensation. A child care center is usually located in a commercial building and care may be provided for children ages infant through school-age.

3. How can I find a licensed child care facility for my child?

All licensed child care facilities are listed on BCCL's web page – either through AZCareCheck.com or a database list located under Parent & Community Resources. Other resources are [Child Care Resource and Referral](#) and The [Department of Economic Security \(DES.\)](#)

4. Why should I choose a licensed child care center or certified child care group home for my child?

The child care licensed or certified providers must be fingerprinted and receive a clearance card as a result of an extensive background check done at that time by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). In addition to the licensing inspections done by BCCL, centers are required to have liability insurance and fire, sanitation and safety inspections. Child care group homes are required to have liability insurance and meet local zoning requirements.

5. Do all child care group homes have to be certified by the state of Arizona?

No, a person may care for four or fewer children for compensation without being a certified child care group home. A person caring for five or more children for compensation must be certified by BCCL in order to operate legally.

6. How many children may a center care for at one time?

The square footage for the indoor activity areas and the age of the children being cared for in each room determine the number of children who may be cared for in a child care center. The maximum number of children that the center may care for will be printed on the license and each room will have a maximum capacity posted.

7. What happens to my child if my group home provider becomes ill or has an accident during the day?

Regulations require each provider to have a person who is qualified and is familiar with the regulations and policies of the home to be present when the provider is not home.

8. How will I learn about the center's rules and policies?

The center is required to provide the parents with a written Statement of Services (Parent Handbook) which must include, but is not limited to, the following information:

- A description of the facility's child care services classifications in R9-5-204
- Hours of operation
- The facility's street address, city, state, zip code, mailing address, and telephone number
- Enrollment and disenrollment procedures
- Charges, fees and payment requirements
- Admission and release requirements
- Age-appropriate discipline guidelines and methods
- Transportation procedures
- Field trip requirements and procedures

- Responsibilities and participation of parents in facility activities
- A general description of activities and programs
- A description of the liability insurance required and a statement that it is available for review on premise
- Medication policy
- Accident and emergency procedures
- A notice stating inspection reports are available on-site
- Statement that the facility is regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services including the Department's local address and telephone number.
- The procedures for notifying a parent at least 48 hours before a pesticide is applied on facility premise
- A statement that a parent has access to the areas on facility premises where the parent's enrolled child is receiving child care services

9. Can the staff at the center or home give medications to my child?

The staff at the center or home may or may not administer medication depending on their policy. If they choose to administer medications, there are strict guidelines in the rules that must be followed.

10. What happens when a center or home fails to meet some of the regulations?

When the Department determines that the facility is not in compliance, BCCL will cite the facility and offer technical assistance to help them return to compliance. An acceptable Written Documentation of Corrections is required. If there is a consistent pattern of non-compliance or areas which endanger the health and safety of children, legal action may be taken against the facility. Legal actions may include reduction of services, fines suspension or revocation of the license. Refer to BCCL's web page "Enforcement/Complaints" section

11. How do I know if staff at a center or home is meeting regulations?

The staff at a center or home is required to make inspection reports available to parents. These reports are also available on BCCL's web page at AZCareCheck.com. The Child Care Rules and Statutes may be found in the "Rules/Regulations" section of the web page.

12. What will happen when there is an emergency and I cannot be reached?

Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact persons on the "Emergency, Information and Immunization Record" card. The staff at the center or home will try to contact the parent first and if the parent cannot be reached, the persons listed as the emergency contacts will be called. In the event that parents and the persons listed as the emergency contacts cannot be reached, 911 or Child Protective Services will be called.

13. What are the staff-to-child ratios for child care centers and child care group homes?

The ratios for centers are:

- Infants – 1:5 or 2:11
- One year old children – 1:6 or 2:13
- Two year old children – 1:8
- Three year old children – 1:13
- Four year old children – 1:15
- Five year old children – 1:20
- School-age children – 1:20

The required staff-to-child ratios for a mixed age group of children is based on the age of the youngest child in a group.

The ratios for homes, regardless of age, are: 1:5
2:6-10

14. What do I look for when visiting a center or home?

There is a brochure entitled "A Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care in Homes, Centers and School Programs" available on BCCL's web page that can be printed and taken to the center or home when visiting.

15. Can BCCL recommend centers or homes to parents?

BCCL does not rate a facility. BCCL maintains a Public File for three years on each facility. These files are available for public review. Each file has inspection reports, complaint information, deficiencies and documentation of corrections as well as the full licensing history and applicant information. The BCCL web page has a list of each facility by city and zip code. (See question 3 above)

16. Can infants be present in the same room with older children?

In a center, infants may be present in the same room with older children if those older children are younger than school-age children and there are less than 6 children present. Infants may not be present in a room with school-age children. When there are 6 or more children present at the center, infants may not be present in a room with any other age group. In a home, all ages, including infants, may be present.

17. How do I find out about complaints or any enforcement actions against a facility?

All complaint investigation reports are available for parents to review at the center or home. BCCL keeps a record of all complaints and they may be reviewed at the BCCL office. Also, refer to the "[Enforcement Action Search](#)" link on the BCCL's web page.

18. How do I file a complaint? Who do I call if BCCL cannot take my complaint?

Any individual or agency who suspects that a regulation is being violated may call in a complaint, send it in writing or use the complaint forms available on the BCCL's web home page. (Refer to the "Enforcement/Complaints" section - *Complaint form.*) Complaints are prioritized based on the severity and risk to children and are investigated in a timely manner. BCCL investigates all complaints that are based on rule or statute violations within their jurisdiction. To file a complaint, call BCCL between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and speak to the Surveyor on Duty who is available to answer calls and take complaints. If the complaint is not within BCCL jurisdiction, the Surveyor can refer you to the appropriate agency.

19. How often are facilities inspected?

Centers are inspected at least annually. Homes are inspected at least twice annually. All annual and mid-year inspections and complaint investigations are unannounced. Additional inspections may be conducted to ensure continued compliance with State regulations. For more information about the survey process refer to "Child Care Facilities Survey Process – How the State Surveys Child Care Centers and Child Care Group homes" available in the "[Parent & Community Information](#)" section on the BCCL's web page.

20. Can a facility disenroll my child for any reason?

Yes, a facility can disenroll a child based on their policies and procedures listed in their "Statement of Services" (Parent Handbook)

21. Why don't some facilities have to be licensed?

If parents remain at the facility (on premises) while the child is in care, those facilities are exempt.

Local Child Care Licensing Offices:

Phoenix Metro Area:

BUREAU OF CHILD CARE LICENSING
150 NORTH 18TH AVENUE, SUITE 400
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
PHONE: (602) 364-2539
FAX: (602) 364-4768

Tucson/Yuma Area:

BUREAU OF CHILD CARE LICENSING
400 WEST CONGRESS, SUITE 100
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85701
PHONE: (520) 628-6541
FAX: (520) 628-6537

Flagstaff/Northern Arizona Area:

BUREAU OF CHILD CARE LICENSING
2532 N 4TH ST. #352 (MAIL ONLY)
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA 86004
PHONE: (800) 615-8555
FAX: (602) 364-4768