



The Licensing Link

Spring: April 2024

Dakota County Social Services

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Happy Spring from Family Child Care Licensing (FCCL),

Thank you providers for continuing to provide safe and quality care for children. Dakota county recognizes you and celebrates the work that you do and the services you provide!

Spring is a time for renewal and new opportunities. With that said this Spring FCCL Newsletter is full of provider friendly topics, updates, training offerings, and helpful information.

Thank you once again to all providers that participated in the fall 2023 survey, and those that reviewed our video explaining provider survey results and next steps planned. By chance if you have not reviewed the survey results video, you can view it here: <https://youtu.be/IJrtRz-2cj8>

Per provider survey results and recommendations, Dakota County FCCL would like to announce two provider important updates. First, with the recent approval from our County Attorney’s office, Dakota County Social Services Administration, and FCCL, we will be introducing an age distribution variance policy beginning July 1, 2024. More information can be found on page 2. Second, Dakota County FCCL will be offering two interactive and in person, 1 hr. provider evening trainings, in June 2024. These two interactional sessions will address provider topics of interest as indicated by the recent survey. More about these training offerings can be found on page 3.

As noted in previous FCCL newsletters, in addition to being tasked with FCC inspection and regulation by the Department of Human Services (DHS), FCCL also strives to build positive and respectful connections with community partners, families, and child care providers. We will continue to demonstrate this effort though transparency, explanation of statute, rules, discussion of our policies, and by providing ongoing information to child care providers about FCCL and DHS happenings.

~ *Mitzi Mabry, FCCL Supervisor*



Spring is a time for renewal and new opportunities ~

What's Blooming? *Dakota County FCCL Age Distribution Variance Policy and Process*

Dakota County Social Services, Dakota County Attorney's Office, and the FCCL Unit would like to announce the introduction of an age distribution variance policy for licensed family child cares officially effective July 1, 2024.

The FCCL Age Distribution Variance Policy and Procedure was developed based upon provider feedback, survey results, Dakota County variance history, and internal Dakota County department collaboration. **Please understand that although this new age distribution policy and procedure may not address concerns for all family child care providers, it is Dakota County's first step in the process of reintroducing such a policy since 2013.**

Around 2013 Dakota County elected to discontinue age distribution variance considerations due to an increase in child injuries and deaths within child care settings and cases reported to Child Protection –Children and Family Social Services. Dakota County Social Services, the FCCL Unit, and child care providers primary objective is the health and safety of children. With this explained, this is our first step of again “testing the waters” and reintroducing an age distribution variance policy and procedure.

Within the upcoming months, we will share details of the new Dakota County FCCL Age Distribution Policy and Procedure. May 2024, an all provider email will address the details of this policy and procedure. June 2024, the full policy, procedure, and supported forms will be posted to the [FCCL website](#). There will be accompanying steps and documentation that will need to be completed and submitted along with an age distribution variance request.

We have completed in depth comparisons to other metro county age distribution variance procedures and researched DHS documentation required to implement this policy. It is important to note a few stipulations to this new policy which include; a provider must be in exceptional standing, have a demonstrated history of licensure compliance, and no new acceptance of an infant into care are some prerequisites to submitting a variance request.

Once again, we are aware that this new age distribution policy and procedure may not address concerns for all family child care providers, but is our first step within a process of addressing child care provider and family needs while prioritizing the health and safety of children.

To be thorough, we must note that under [245A.16](#), DHS does give authority to counties to develop, implement, and approve such variance policy and procedure. Dakota County does have the right to withdrawal this policy and procedure at anytime, however we are invested in cultivating this policy and procedure, and are dedicated to revisiting this process in 18 months.

We have appreciated your input and consideration ~



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Survey Identified Provider Topics of Interest: Free FCCL Child Care Provider Trainings

Thank you again to all providers that participated in our survey. One of the survey questions inquired what training topics may be of interest to providers beyond the 16 hours of mandated training. Providers responded that licensing role definition, statute and rule refresher, information about the Provider Hub, legislative updates, and Dakota County Community Resources were the top five topics of interest.

Based on your voices and recommendation, the FCCL Unit would like to announce we will begin offering trainings by holding two, evening, 60 minute, provider training sessions in June 2024. Credit will be provided.



These sessions will be interactive, engaging, and beneficial for providers which will include opportunities to connect with others, team participation, quizzes, prizes, resources, snacks, and more. Training sessions will be hosted and led by FCCL licensors, so there will also be opportunities for Q & A. Below are these initial sessions.

Pre-registration is required and limited to 40 – 50 participants due to maximum occupancy standards. Register by clicking on the session title and enter information under purple headings and submit. **We look forward to seeing you!**

Monday, June 17, 2024 - [The Many Roles Within Family Childcare Licensing: Who does what.](#)
(Roles of DHS Licensing, County FCCL, MN DHS Commissioner, NetStudy 2.0, and FCC Ombudsman)
6:30 pm to 7:30pm, 14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124 Room 106 (first floor)

Thursday, June 20, 2024 - [Statute 245A and Rule 9502 Updates and Refresher.](#)
(Relevant statute and rule updates, common licensing findings and resolutions, interactive refresher activity)
6:30 pm to 7:30pm, 14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124 Room 106 (first floor)

More Helpful Provider Resources



Need Your Fire Extinguisher Serviced?

DCFCCA is offering a service event.

August 5, 2024

5:30pm - 7:30pm

Cost \$13.00

North East section of the Dakota County, Western Service Center parking lot.
14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley

Providers do not need to be a DCFCCA member to attend.
Contact president@dcfccca.org for more information.

Dates 2024

Feb. 15	Sept. 19
March. 21	Oct. 17
April 18	Nov. 14
May 16	Dec. 12
June 20	
July 18	
Aug. 15	



FIRST AID &
CPR
TRAINING

Contact Kristine Hanson
Email:
Kristine651@gmail.com
Cell: 952-270-5654

35+ years of teaching experience in the industrial field. I served on an ambulance service for 20+ years, so bringing the real life experiences to the classroom gives the students a better understanding of what a medical or trauma incident is really like. I offer open enrollment classes once a month.



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Team Goodbyes and Exciting FCCL Welcomes

The FCCL Team would like to extend our thanks to providers for patience and understanding during this transition.

Recently one of our seasoned licensing social workers accepted a new position within Dakota County. **Jolene Swan** was with the FCCL team for over 8 years and the team fully supports her decision to grow professionally. In addition, last week we received word from our part time licensing social worker, **Jenna Lyons**, who was on maternity leave that she and her family want to focus on baby, thus will not be returning to work at Dakota County. The FCCL team supports her decision and shares in the celebration of welcoming her new family member. Understandably we all will miss both Jolene and Jenna, their support of providers and to the team has been esteemed.

Both vacancies will be filled shortly, in the meantime if providers who worked with Jolene or Jenna have child care questions, they can send inquires to childcare@co.dakota.mn.us.

Welcome: Cheers To New Beginnings

FCCL would like to happily announce that **Amy N.** who's been PT licensing social worker with our unit for 25 years, has elected to become FT effective May, 2024.

We would like to welcome **Sarah C.** to the FCCL as our new PT licensing social worker. Sarah will be beginning the second week in April and has a background in education, child care, and foster care licensing. More information to come.

The FCCL Team would also like providers to know we are in the process of hiring yet another FT licensing social worker. Stay tuned for more information.



Whoa! Did you know?

In addition to holding a degree in social work, social services, child development or related field, new FCC Licensing Social Workers are required by DHS and Dakota County to complete the following before they can begin provider licensing functions independently?

- 40 hours of DHS mandated statute, rule, procedures, and inspections training -and -
- 15 hours of DHS mandated inspection documentation training -and -
- 5 + hours of state mandated Fire Marshal training -and-
- 20 hours of Dakota County and FCCL onboarding including mission, structure, policy, procedure, and shadowing senior licensors.



Five Year Expiring Background Studies Let's Prepare Together

FCCL is preparing ahead of time to lessen the burden and confusion for child care providers.

Five year background studies completed in 2019 and are beginning to expire. Therefore, FCCL has developed this provider notification process so we can prepare together.

In addition to **direct reminders from DHS/NetStudy 2.0**, sixty days prior to a five year background study (with fingerprints) expiration, an individual **will receive a notice from FCCL, example below**. Five year background studies apply to license holders, household members, and/or anyone affiliated or working within your program. Currently there is no fee for background studies (with fingerprinting).



Helpful links:

[Background studies / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](#)

[NETStudy 2.0 FAQs / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](#)

Example Notice:

Important: Expiring Background Studies

Enhanced (fingerprint) background studies must be repeated every five years. You are receiving this information because you, someone living in your home, or someone working in your program has a background study that will be expiring soon. New background studies must be initiated by the study subject in the NetStudy2.0 system **within 90 days of expiration date**.

Please follow these steps to complete a background study:

Each study subject needs to complete a data collection form (enclosed) and return it to your licensing worker.

Each person who is required to have a background study should follow the enclosed instructions and initiate a study in NetStudy2.0. Ensure the information entered in NetStudy accurately reflects the exact name and birthdate on the ID of the individual initiating the study. **A NetStudy2.0 account was created when the study subject completed the original background study. The subject should use that same account information to log in and initiate a new background study.**

Check your email! Your licensor will verify and submit the study in NetStudy2.0. Once the study is submitted, an email will automatically be sent to the background study subject from the fingerprint vendor (nobody@uemail.identogo.com). Open the email link and follow the instructions to schedule your fingerprint appointment. **Important: Schedule your fingerprint appointment ASAP!** If you don't receive an email, be sure to check your "junk" or "SPAM" folders.

Once the study is submitted by your licensor, the study subject has 14 days to get fingerprinted.

*You will receive daily reminder emails from NetStudy beginning 60 days prior to the background study expiration date until a new background study is completed!

Our records indicate that the following individuals associated with your program will need a new background study:

Name: Jane Doe



Training and Resources

The next pages are dedicated to training, updates, and resources available for family child care providers.



Training Sign Up Through



Think Small/Child Care Aware of Minnesota now offers live and online Instructor-Led Trainings!
*A Develop ID number **and** a free Think Small Institute account are required to register for online trainings.*

Active Supervision: Preventing Child Injuries in Family Child Care Settings — Family Child Care only

Registration closes on 4/10/24

Wednesday, April 17 - 6:30pm - 8:30pm - [Eagan Community Center](#)

KCF VII.B: Ensuring Safety - 2 hours, \$10.00

Exploring the Family Caregiver Partnership

Registration closes 4/18/24

Thursday, April 25 - 6:30pm - 8:30pm - [Apple Valley Community Center](#)

KCF III: Relationships with Families - 2 hours, \$10.00

Supervisión Activa: Cuidado propio y privacidad del proveedor

Inscríbese hasta del 4 de mayo

Sábado 11 de mayo - 9:30am - 11:30am - [Think Small Minneapolis](#)

KCF VII.B: Garantizando la Seguridad - 2 horas, \$10.00

Dakota County Family Child Care Association

"DCFCCA is a non-profit group of volunteer family child care providers. Dakota County Licensing is a separate and non-affiliated agency."





Dakota County Family Child Care Association

Our Future is in Our Hands

We Are Looking For You!

Mission Statement

The DCFCCA is committed to promoting quality licensed family child care within the community by offering providers affordable education and professional support.

- Membership includes **free monthly training** options, including KCF required training. Annual membership is \$40.
- Easy online membership process and training registration
- Free one-year membership for new licensed providers
- Bi-Monthly Newsletter
- Free advertising on our Provider Directory.
- Private members only Facebook page
- Mentorship Program for new providers
- Providers Night Out socializing opportunities
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Non-member training registration is also available online.

JOIN NOW!

For more information, visit our website at www.dcfcca.org.

DCFCCA is a non-profit group of volunteer family child care providers. Dakota County Licensing is a separate and non-affiliated agency.



Training and Resources Continued

Mandated Reporter Training for Those Who Work with Children

Tuesday, April 16th, 2024

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Presented by Dakota County Children and Family Services and the Dakota County Attorney's Office

To register for this free event: [Click Here](#)

What is a mandated reporter?

Mandated reporters are people whose positions require them to report suspected child abuse or neglect to social services or law enforcement. Childcare professionals, social workers, teachers, physicians, and a number of other professionals who work with children and families are mandated reporters under MN law.

Do I have to go to this training? Is it required?

No. Dakota County offers this training periodically for people who are mandated reporters, but mandated reporters are not required to attend. Although not required, you are encouraged to attend to learn how to help children you are in contact with, as well as what is legally required of you.

What does the training cover?

Definitions of mandated reporter and neglect/abuse as it relates to child maltreatment
Legal requirements of a mandated reporter
Process of making a child protection report to Social Services
What happens at Social Services after a report is received

Will certificates of attendance be offered? Yes, certificates will be provided for all registered attendees.



Why get a Parent Aware Rating?

Programs participating in Parent Aware have access to incredible benefits that can support their work with children and their families. Parent Aware recognizes and rewards commitment to quality. If you participate in the Full-Rating Pathway, you may be eligible to receive financial supports to improve your quality. Depending on your Rating Pathway and Star Level, these include:

- Parent Aware grants to invest in your program
- The ability to accept Early Learning Scholarships
- Higher Child Care Assistance reimbursement rates



You also receive free marketing materials and appear at the top of search results on ParentAware.org!

Questions or more information? Contact Tanisha Lungelow-Staff Leader of Parent Aware Recruitment for the 7-County Metro Area at 651-233-2297 or email tlungelow@thinksmall.org

"Parent Aware is provider training and rating program. Dakota County Licensing is a separate and non-affiliated agency."



Licensing Link: April 2024 Quiz

(Return this quiz to your licensor via mail or email for one hour of training credit!)

Name: _____ Licensing Social Worker: _____

1. How far in advance will providers/individuals receive notice they need to renew their 5-year background study? _____.
2. What organization is coordinating the fire extinguisher service event August 5, 2024? _____.
3. What month will the Dakota County Social Services/FCCL Age Distribution Variance Policy and Procedure be posted to the FCCL website? _____.
4. What are the titles of the two provider focused free trainings that the FCCL Team will offer in June 2024?
_____ and _____.
5. T or F NetStudy 2.0 access and log in is required to initiate 5-year background study renewals?
6. How many total hours of DHS, Fire Marshal, and Dakota County training is required before a FCC Licensing Social Worker can begin provider licensing functions independently?
 - a. At least 25 hours
 - b. At least 80 hours
 - c. At least 50 hours
7. When will the FCCL Age Distribution Policy and Procedure officially go into effect? _____.
8. What MN DHS statute specifically allows for counties to develop certain variance policies? _____.



DAKOTA COUNTY CHILD CARE LICENSING DIRECTORY

Licensors	Email	Phone	Coverage Area
Demetria Costa	demetria.costa@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7485	Eagan, Inver Grove Heights
Michelle Engquist	michelle.engquist@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7481	South St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Farmington A-Mo, Southern small cities
Vacant	Vacant childcare@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7324	Farmington Mp-Z, Lakeville O-Z, Special Family Child Cares
Julie Finnerty	julie.finnerty@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7405	Apple Valley, Lakeville A—N
Amy Novak	amy.novak@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7841	Burnsville R—Z, Rosemount
Sarah Callahan	sarah.callahan@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7188	Pending assignment
Vacant	Vacant childcare@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7361	Burnsville A—Q, Hastings, Small Cities
Supervisor: Mitzi Mabry	mitzi.mabry@co.dakota.mn.us	952-891-7035	New Provider Inquiries, Intakes, and Illegally Unlicensed Reports

Dakota County Social Services—Family Child Care Licensing

childcare@co.dakota.mn.us

14955 Galaxie Avenue

Apple Valley, MN 55124

Phone: (952) 891-7400

Fax: (952) 891-7473

