

Section G: Ministerial Requirements for a Family Communications Plan



Ministerial Requirements for a Family Communications Plan

1.0 Definitions

“**Act**” means the *Early Learning and Child Care Act*.

“**Agency**” means a person licensed by the Minister to manage family child-care homes.

“**Agency director**” means a person who provides daily onsite supervision of an agency.

“**Care provider**” means a person approved by an agency to provide a family home child-care program in the care provider's home.

“**Child care**” means providing children with care and guidance that support the child's development and learning when they are apart from their parents or guardian but does not include services exempted by the Regulations.

“**Department**” means Education and Early Childhood Development.

“**Family child-care home**” means a care provider's home where a family home child-care program is provided.

“**Family communications plan**” means the communications plan required for a licensee or care provider under Section 32A of the *Regulations*.

“**Family home child-care program**” means a child-care program provided by a care provider in the care provider's home.

“**Family home consultant**” means a person hired by the agency to provide services and support to care providers.

“**Licensee**” means the person in whose name a licence has been issued under the Act.

“**Parent**” includes a guardian, foster parent and any other person having the care and custody of a child.

“**Regulations**” means the *Early Learning and Child Care Regulations* made under the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* (the “Act”), as amended from time to time.

“**Staff**” means paid employees of a licensee and does not include care providers.

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 The objective of these requirements is to set out the requirements with respect to family engagement and communication with families in child-care programs in accordance with Section 32A of the *Early Learning and Child Care Regulations* (“Regulations”). These requirements are intended to ensure that parents, licensees, care providers and all child care staff understand the expectations for open communication and have opportunities to communicate with each other in a respectful manner on an ongoing basis.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1 These requirements apply to every child-care program offered in a child care facility and every family home child-care program.

4.0 Family Engagement and Communications Plan

- 4.1 To facilitate communication and engagement between licensees, staff, care providers, parents and families of children enrolled in a child-care program, each licensed child-care facility, agency and care provider must establish a family communications plan that complies with the following requirements:

The family communication plan must:

- (i) Be approved by the licensee of the child-care facility or agency.
- (ii) Include an overview of how parents and families will have access to information about their children’s experience in the child care facility and family home child-care program.
- (iii) Identify opportunities for parents and families to engage in the child-care program and develop an authentic connection to their children’s learning, development, emerging interests and competencies.

- 4.2** To ensure information is easily accessible to parents and families, the following must be posted in a visible place in each facility or family child-care home ¹
- (i) A copy of the *Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations*.
 - (ii) A copy of the licence for the facility or agency.
 - (iii) A copy of the parent handbook.
 - (iv) A list of the current members of the parent committee and a copy of most recent minutes of the parent committee.
 - (v) A copy of the report of the most recent inspection by the Department.
 - (vi) A copy of the report of the most recent visit by the family home consultant to a family child-care home.
 - (vii) A copy of the licensee's behavior guidance policy.
 - (viii) A copy of the current menu.
 - (ix) A copy of the daily program plan and routine.
 - (x) Licensing sticker.
 - (xi) Notification of funding provided to the licensee by the Department.
 - (xii) Any additional information required by the Minister after written notice to the licensee.
- 4.3** Parents and families must be notified of scheduled events, parent available resources, and provided with information regarding inspections and regulatory/ Ministerial requirements.
- 4.4** Parents and families must have access to a parent handbook which includes key information with respect to facility and agency policies. The parent handbook must include a statement that all of the information listed in section 4.2, above, are posted in the facility, agency and each family child-care home.
- 4.5** Each licensee must form a parent committee that is open and accessible to parents of all enrolled children². A parent committee must be composed of at least 5 members, as follows:
- (a) At least 3 parents of children currently enrolled in a child-care program operated or managed by the licensee;
 - (b) 1 representative of the licensee (may be the director) who must attend each meeting of the committee; and
 - (c) 1 representative of the staff who provide regular care for the children or, in the case of a family home child-care program, 1 care provider.
- 4.6** The majority of the members of a parent committee must be parents of children currently enrolled.

¹ *Early Learning and Child Care Regulations* ("Regulations"), Section 45

² *Regulations*, Section 47(3)

4.7 Licensees must:

- (a) Keep a current list of parent committee members and their positions.
- (b) Provide the Minister with information about the composition of its parent committee and contact information for committee members upon request.
- (c) Hold a parent committee meeting at least two times per year.
- (d) Document discussion and action items from each parent committee meeting and post the minutes of the most recent meeting in the child care facility or family child-care home.

4.8 A parent committee meeting may be conducted remotely using technology such as Skype and social media to bring the parent committee together. When using technology to support communication within the parent committee, the licensee must also ensure there are opportunities and options for parents to meet in person.

5.0 Infant and Toddler Daily Records

5.1 Facility staff and care providers must keep a daily record for an infant or toddler enrolled in a child-care program and the daily record must:

- (a) Provide general information to a parent about the child's day and any unusual occurrences.
- (b) Include space or opportunity for the child's parent to comment and ask questions.
- (c) Be available to the child's parent each day to allow them to provide special instructions or information about the child.
- (d) Be retained for at least 6 months by the facility director or care provider.

5.2 When daily records are digital or hard copy, the licensee must ensure the records are managed in a secure manner and safeguards are in place to protect the privacy of staff, care providers, parents, families and children.