

Frequently Asked Questions About Becoming a School Readiness Provider

- 1. Do I have to maintain ratios even if I'm a license exempt or informal provider not regulated by DCF?**

Yes. All providers caring for School Readiness children must maintain DCF staff to child ratios at all times. For more information on staff to child ratio, please see the staff-to-child ratio, as established in Section 402.305(4) of Florida Statute by visiting the following link:

http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/filestores/web/statutes/fs07/CH0402/Section_0402.305.HTM

- 2. How will I know what my city or county requires as far as a Business Tax Certificate or License?**

Please contact your city or county and ask what is required to operate a business within city/county limits.

- 3. I only want to watch a few children. Do I really have to get liability insurance?**

Yes. Liability insurance is a requirement of the School Readiness Provider Network Agreement. No Agreements will be approved without evidence of liability insurance.

- 4. I don't want to open a childcare center. How can I get paid for watching my relative's children without going through all the training needed for a center or home?**

An informal childcare provider can care for children from their own family as well as children from one other family. While the Department of Children and Families does not require an informal provider to complete training in order to provide care, however, the ELC requires that an informal provider complete the 30 –clock hour Family Child Care Training; 5-clock-hour Early Literacy and Language Development; and CPR and First Aid Training.

- 5. I noticed there is a DCF office in Northwood Center near the ELC's main office. Can I just walk over there and become a childcare provider?**

DCF has many different departments and the location in the Northwood Center is not the department that handles child care licensing. Please contact DCF via telephone at the number listed in this packet that corresponds to the county in which you would like to operate.

6. If I want to open an afterschool program that only serves school age children, do I still need to complete training?

Programs that only serve school age children, such as afterschool or summer only programs, do not have to complete the 5 clock-hour Early Literacy and Language Development training. CPR and First Aid certification is a requirement for at least one staff member who is on premises at all times during hours of operation for these programs.

7. What classifies a program as religious exempt?

A child care facility may claim Religious Exemption from DCF licensure if:

- It is an integral part of a church or parochial schools conducting regularly scheduled classes, courses of study or educational programs.
- It is accredited by, or by a member of, an organization that publishes and requires compliance with its standards for health, safety and sanitation.
- It meets background screening requirements in 402.305, 402.3055, and 435.04, Florida Statutes.

Religious exempt child care facilities must submit an affidavit annually to the Department of Children and Families stating all child care personnel have worked at the facility on a continuing basis since initial screening or have complied with screening requirements.

Please refer to the following link on the DCF website for additional information:
<http://ccrain.fl-dcf.org/documents/7/42.pdf#page=1>

8. I used to be a School Readiness provider but I stopped a few years ago. If I want to start again, can I do so without attending a provider orientation?

No. The provider orientation will give you the tools you need to be a successful School Readiness provider. You will receive a complete review of the most current Provider Network Agreement which may have changed in the time you were not a School Readiness provider. You will also receive valuable information on how to correctly complete and submit your monthly attendance rosters which is the key to receiving reimbursement for School Readiness children in your care.

9. Can I sign up to take the childcare training classes I need to become a provider or work at a center at the ELC?

No. You must contact DCF to complete the required training needed to become a child care provider or work in a child care center. The ELC does not offer those courses at this time.

10. I have a college degree/early childhood credential. Can you waive the training requirements for me?

If you have a valid early childhood credential or college degree, you may contact the Childcare Training and Information Center at 1-888-352-2842 for assistance in determining what training courses you need to take to operate as a childcare provider or work at a childcare center. The ELC cannot make decisions regarding DCF training requirements.