



**Standards for School-administered Child Care, Chapter 0520-12-01  
SUMMARY**

**Program Approval, 0520-12-01-.03**

- All persons or entities must be certified by the Tennessee Department of Education.
- At least five school-aged children enrolled in kindergarten or above must be documented to be considered for approval by department jurisdiction. If documentation is not proven, the program will then be referred to the Department of Human Services for licensing.
- A least two visits will be made to the program under the temporary license to ensure health and safety regulations are followed. Once the annual license is issued, visits will include one announced and one unannounced each program year. Supplemental visits may include a summer visit, complaint investigations, and follow-ups for violations noted at the regular visits.
- A certificate is not transferable to another location.
- The program must submit an annual report to the department prior to Oct. 1. The certificate may be suspended if the report is incomplete.
- Programs are subject to being issued a safety plan if the department finds major health and safety violations during any on-site visit.

**Program Organization and Administration, 0520-12-01-.05**

- A Child Care Center must have an adequate budget. General liability, automobile liability, and medical payment insurances must be maintained on all properties and vehicles owned or operated by the program.
- Children's files must include a complete application, an official immunization record (exceptions do apply), and health history before the child is allowed in the classroom.
- On-going parent communication is expected. Programs must provide a parent handbook with the policies, procedures, and the department requirements, chapter 0520-12-01. It is expected that parents sign for receipt of the policies and requirements, and this would be kept in the child's file. All parents shall be given a pre-placement visit opportunity.
- Parents must have access to all areas of the center when their child is present.
- The parents must receive an educational program regarding child abuse detection, reporting, and prevention.
- A written plan must be in place for the release of each child and should include individuals who are allowed to pick up the child at the end of the day, or any given time, by the parent.
- Children must be signed out of the program by the legal guardian. Staff may require to see a person's identification when releasing a child from the program.
- Injuries and incidences will be reported to the parent as soon as possible or at the end of the school day. This shall be documented in the child's file.
- Staff records must be kept on each employee that includes educational background, reference checks, TBI check, in-service training, physical exams, and performance reviews.

- If the center provides transportation, the driver should be appropriately licensed, have a drug screening on file, and certificate of CPR/First Aid, there must be liability insurance and the children must have adequate space and supervision. Transportation provided by the center, or under center authorization, shall comply with state law.
- Programs must have the current Certificate of Approval posted where parents and visitors can easily see it, along with the Department of Human Services (DHS) childcare complaint number and the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Child Abuse Hotline number.
- No smoking must also be posted in a conspicuous manner.
- A copy of the state board rules (chapter 0520-12-01) must be maintained in a central space and available to all staff and parents.

**Program Operation (Supervision), 0520-12-01-.06**

- Careful supervision of each group is expected at all times and suited appropriately for each age grouping.
- Adult:child ratios and group sizes must be followed.

Single-age grouping chart:

AGE	GROUP SIZE	ADULT:CHILD RATIO
Infant (6wks-12 m)	8	1:4
Toddler (11m-23m)	12	1:6
Two (2) years old	14	1:7
Three (3) years old	18	1:9
Four (4) years old	20	1:13
VPK, 619, PDG	20	1:10

Multi-age grouping chart:

AGE	GROUP SIZE	ADULT:CHILD RATIO
Infant – 18 months	8	1:4
18 – 36 months	16	1:8
3 – 4 years old only	20	1:10
3 – 6 years old*	24	1:13

\*Not including first grade children

- Group sizes must be maintained in the classroom, but classes may combine while outdoors, in common dining areas, or common napping areas.
- Each group must have their own space. Infants cannot be grouped with children older than 30 months; a separate area must be provided for infants and toddlers.
- At naptime, ratios may be relaxed for groups (except for infants and toddlers).
- A written playground supervision plan is required.
- Field trips require adult:child ratios to be doubled. Swimming has a separate ratio chart (page 17) and the lifeguard is not included in the ratio.

**Staff, 0520-12-01-.07**

- All programs must have a director and enough teachers and staff to meet the required ratios for adequate supervision.
- Staff must be physically, mentally, and emotionally stable to work with children and have knowledge of early childhood behaviors and development.
- Preschool directors, teachers, and assistant teachers must be 21 years of age.
- All new staff must complete two hours of orientation before assuming duties and receive annual instruction in early childhood topics that are required in this chapter section.

- Documentation of training hours is to be maintained for each staff member and available for the department at any time during the program year.
- The program must maintain written documentation that each employee has read the full set of all applicable rules.
- A copy of the entire rules must be maintained and readily accessible to all employees.
- All staff must have a criminal background check upon hiring and must be cleared before assuming duties. A new fingerprint sample is required every five years for all employees.
- All teachers and assistant teachers must be at least 21 years of age.
- A director shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations, shall be physically present in the facility for at least half the hours of operation, be at least 21 years of age, and follow the qualification guidelines listed in this chapter section.
- An assistant director may be designated in charge when the director is absent.
- All directors, assistant directors, teachers, assistant teachers, and other staff working directly with the children must have 30 hours of professional development training. At least six hours of this professional development must be in developmentally appropriate literacy practices.

#### **Program, 0520-12-01-.09**

- Educational activity must be developmentally appropriate for the age and ability of the children enrolled. (See TN-ELDS for Birth-48 Months and TN-ELDS for 48 month-Kindergarten)
- Any technology used by the children must be reviewed by staff, approved by parents, and shall not exceed two hours per day.
- Children shall not be left in restraining devices (swings, car seats, high chairs, etc.) for periods longer than 30 minutes.
- Children should have opportunities to play together, and also alone, when they choose to do so.
- Personal safety must be taught each year for children ages three years through school age. Parents must be made aware of the curriculum and written approval from the parent/guardian must be maintained for each child.
- Outdoor play must be provided for all ages who are in care for more than three daylight hours, weather permitting (temp ranges 32-95 degrees).
- Behavior management and discipline must be reasonable and age appropriate. Spanking or other corporal punishment is not allowed. Timeout must be based on the age of the child and take place in an appropriate location.
- Children shall not be in care for longer than 12 hours in a day.
- Routines such as snack, meals, and rest shall occur at approximately the same time each day.

#### **Health and Safety, 0520-12-01-.10**

- A first aid kit must be on the premises and a comprehensive first aid chart or list must be available.
- There must be a staff member present at all times who has a current certification in CPR and first aid training.
- A written plan to protect children during disasters is required. Drills must be practiced and documented each month. At least one drill must be practiced during extended care hours.
- Smoking and the consumption of alcohol are not allowed on the premises of a child care program.
- Firearms are not allowed on the premises, or in a vehicle, used to transport children.
- Kitchen knives, or other potentially hazardous tools, must be kept inaccessible to children.
- Staff's personal belongings must be kept inaccessible to children.
- Emergency contact numbers must be listed and posted near all telephones.
- Conduct regular morning health checks of each child and notify parents immediately when a child is sick or injured.
- Medication may not be given to any child without the written consent of the parent/guardian.
- Safe sleep practices for infants must be followed:
  - Infants placed on their back to sleep or in a crib or pack 'n play with only the sheet. Soft bedding for infants is not allowed.

- No swaddling or wrapping in a blanket.
- Infants must be touched by a teacher every 15 minutes to check breathing and body temperature.
- Infant room teachers must have SIDS and safe sleep training before reporting for duty.
- Hand washing and diapering procedures must be followed to minimize the spread of germs in the classrooms.
- Proper diapering procedures must be followed (CDC.gov).
- Developmentally appropriate equipment that is in good repair, and easily cleaned, is required. All manufacturer's safety instructions must be followed.
- Electrical cords and outlets should be inaccessible to the children.
- Children must have a place to store their belongings that minimizes the spread of germs.
- Each child must have their own napping equipment (2" thick mat or cot; sheet or cover for the mat; and a coverlet for their body)
- All staff must report reasonable suspicions of child abuse to DCS hotline number or local law enforcement immediately upon knowledge of the event. Annual training for this is required.
- A child abuse coordinator must be designated by the program. This person must be trained in child abuse reporting, be available for the program staff if they have questions about reporting, and serve as a liaison to the program staff, DCS, and law enforcement agencies.
- All staff and volunteers will cooperate with investigation personnel in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect.

#### **Food, 0520-12-01-.11**

- Children will receive meals based on the amount of hours spent in the program.
- Food should not be forced or withheld from children.
- Infants must be held while bottle feeding and bottles may not be heated in the microwave.
- Special diets and instructions must be provided in writing.
- A menu must be posted each week. Changes to the meal must be documented before the meal occurs.
- Teachers and children must wash hand when handling and eating food.
- All eating surfaces must be washed with soapy water and sanitized before eating and after eating.
- Children must be seated at appropriately sized tables.
- Staff must closely supervise them while eating.
- Milk must be placed in the refrigerator immediately after it is served. All formulas remaining in bottles after feeding must be discarded.
- Highchair manufacturer's restraints must be used.
- Food must be properly handled and stored to protect from it contamination.
- Milk and perishable food must not sit on the table longer than 15 minutes before being served.

#### **Physical Facilities, 0520-12-01-.12**

- All facilities must pass an annual fire inspection and health inspection.
- A working telephone is required.
- A minimum of 30 square feet of usable indoor play space for each child is required.
- The area must be clean and safe for the children to use.
- A minimum of 50 square feet per child is required outdoors.
- The outdoor area must be fenced.
- Outdoor play equipment must be age appropriate for the group of children.
- Outdoor equipment must be placed to avoid injury and have a proper amount of resilient surfacing material to cushion a fall.
- The outdoor playground must be properly maintained with a written playground maintenance plan. A pre-play inspection is required before children play outdoors.
- Drinking water shall be provided in all occupied rooms.
- Adequate temperature must be maintained in all classrooms.

- Classroom pets must be kept in a clean cage and kept away from food storage or food preparation areas.

**Transportation, 0520-12-01-.13**

- All transportation laws must be followed at all times and are defined in State Board of Education Pupil Transportation Rule 0520-01-05-.01 (2).
- Liability insurance coverage is required on all vehicles.
- Fifteen passenger vans are strictly prohibited.
- Proper child passenger restraints are to be used when transporting children in passenger vehicles.
- All school bus drivers must be properly licensed, have received a background check through the department, complete an annual physical and mental exam, complete annual school bus driving training, and complete CPR certification.
- Adult monitors, in addition to the driver, may be needed to properly supervise children while in route.
- Passenger logs must be kept and inspection of vehicles at the end of the route is required to insure no child is left inside the vehicle.

**Care of Children with Special Needs, 0520-12-01-.14**

- When children with special needs are enrolled, all reasonable and appropriate efforts shall be made to provide those children equal opportunity to participate in the same program activities as their peers.
- Adaptations to the environment shall be directed toward normalizing the lifestyle of the child with a disability by helping him/her become independent and develop self-help skills.
- The program shall inform parents of any specialized services available from the program and, if the program is aware of any specialized services available through third parties, shall additionally inform the parent of such services.
- The governing agency shall develop policies and procedures, in accordance with 0520-01-09-.23, governing personnel authorized to use isolation and restraint, training requirements, and incident reporting procedures.

**School-Age Before and after School Programs 0520-12-01-.15**

- All staff shall be 18 years of age.
- Professional development training hours are required: 18 hours for directors and 12 hours for staff.
- The ratio for Kindergarten-12 years old is 1:20 and for 13 years and older is 1:30.
- The ratio and group size requirements, when pre-K is enrolled in the program, are:

AGE	Group Size	Adult: Child Ratio
Including 3 year olds	15	1:10
Including 4 year olds	20	1:12

**COMPLAINT HOTLINE: (LONG DISTANCE) 1-800-462-8261  
(NASHVILLE AREA) 615-313-4820**