

Overview of Upcoming Regulatory Changes

Summary of upcoming regulatory changes under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA). Details can be found in the amending regulation or O. Reg. 137/15.

Safeguarding Children (Additional Offences under s.9 of the CCEYA – s.88.1)

Who this applies to: All child care staff and providers, licensed and unlicensed

Effective date: July 1, 2026

Summary of change: To strengthen protection of children in all child care settings (licensed and unlicensed), additional Criminal Code (Canada) offences are being prescribed in regulation for the purposes of section 9 of the CCEYA.

Note: Anyone working in or providing licensed child care who has been convicted of below-noted offences must notify their licensee immediately and cannot continue working in or providing child care.

- Section 152 invitation to sexual touching
- Section 153 sexual exploitation
- Section 153.1 sexual exploitation of person with a disability
- Section 160(1)(2)(3) bestiality
- Section 162 voyeurism
- Section 162.1 publication of intimate image without consent
- Section 170 parent or guardian procuring sexual activity
- Section 171.1 making sexually explicit materials available to a child
- Section 172.1 luring a child
- Section 172.2 agreement or arrangement sexual offence against a child
- Section 271 sexual assault
- Section 272 sexual assault with weapon, threats to a third party or bodily harm
- Section 273 aggravated sexual assault
- Section 281 abduction of person under 14
- Section 286.1(1) obtaining sexual services for consideration
- Section 286.1(2) obtaining sexual services for consideration from an individual under the age of 18

Safeguarding Children (Prohibited Practices – s.48)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: July 1, 2026

Summary of change: To provide greater clarity and protection for children, the list of prohibited practices will be expanded to include sexual abuse, sexual misconduct and prescribed sexual acts (as defined under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*).

Note: The rules related to prohibited practices apply to all staff in child care centres, all home child care providers and all students and volunteers.

Licensees will need to update their parent handbooks to include the new prohibited practice.

Medication Administration (s.40)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: July 1, 2026

Summary of change: Staff, providers and children will be able to carry a broader range of medications ensuring quick access in an emergency.

As of July 1, 2026, in addition to emergency allergy and asthma medication, staff, providers or children may carry medications for epilepsy and diabetes, as well as any other medication that a prescribing medical professional determines must be readily available to prevent a significant risk to the child's health.

Note: Licensees should also consider what they need to do to ensure other children are not able to access medication being carried by staff, providers or children.

Vehicle Impact Protections (s.24.2)

Who this applies to: New Child Care Centres

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: New child care centres that have their licence issued on (or after) January 1, 2027, will be required to ensure physical safety barriers are installed at the centre to protect children and staff from vehicle impacts. The barriers must meet international standards and protect the centre and the outdoor play space.

Note: Exemptions may apply.

- A Professional Engineer can provide written confirmation that physical safety barriers are not needed.
- Before and after school programs located in publicly-funded schools are exempt from the requirement for physical safety barriers.

Enhanced Septic Safety (s.24.1 and s.31)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: All septic system access points on the property of a child care centre or licensed home child care premises must be secure, inaccessible to children and have a secondary safety device installed.

Child care centres will not be permitted to have a septic system access point located within their licensed outdoor play space. It must be outside the fenced area.

Note: Exemptions may apply.

- Before and after school programs located in a publicly funded school are not subject to these requirements.
- Existing centres have until July 1, 2027 to comply with the new requirements AND may apply for an exemption if they are unable to reconfigure their outdoor play space.

Hazard Mitigation (s. 24.3 and s. 31.1)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must ensure that child care centres and home child care premises are safe by identifying and addressing or eliminating hazards that could cause imminent harm to a child.

Licensees must notify parents/guardians of any high-risk hazards and the actions being taken to mitigate the associated risk.

Note: Hazards include items and/or conditions that could cause imminent harm to a child, including:

- Poisonous and hazardous substances
- Unsecured furniture
- Trip hazards and conditions that could lead to a fall.

Preventing Unauthorized Access (s.24.4)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must put measures in place to prevent unauthorized individuals from accessing the child care centre during its hours of operation.

Parents must be notified through the parent handbook of the measures the licensee is putting in place.

Note: Does not apply to licensed home child care.

Locked door systems or buzzers are one way to address this requirement, but they are not mandatory. Licensees need to review their centre and determine what is appropriate and feasible. Some programs may find it necessary to have locked doors while others may focus on staff training and early identification of individuals entering the centre.

Supervision Policy (s.11)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must develop and implement a supervision policy that sets out clear expectations and strategies for day-to-day supervision, defines staff responsibilities and identifies preventive measures to reduce the risk of supervision related incidents.

Note: A sample policy will be made available through CCLS.

Missing Child Procedures (s.11)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must develop and implement missing child procedures that define when a child is considered missing and set out roles and responsibilities for relevant individuals.

Child care centres must conduct missing child drills once every three months.

Note: Home child care agencies must have procedures in place, but providers are not required to complete drills. Agencies may want to customize missing child procedures for specific premises; however, one set of procedures may also be compliant.

Acting Supervisor in Emergency Situations (s.6)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must ensure that someone is identified to fulfil the supervisor's responsibilities during an emergency if the supervisor is not on site at the child care centre.

Staff Training (s.58)

Who this applies to: Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

Effective date: January 1, 2027

Summary of change: Licensees must ensure that their staff training and development policy includes that staff and providers will be trained on all applicable policies and procedures.

Note: Licensees can choose the type of training that works best for their programs and may consider consolidating policies where it makes sense to do so. A consolidated emergency management policy could include information on lock downs, evacuations, fire drills and missing children OR a supervision policy could include both proactive supervision and missing child procedures. This may simplify staff training.

This document is intended to help applicants and licensees understand what is changing, who is impacted and when the new requirements will take effect.

The overview was written to provide general information and does not consider particular or local facts and circumstances. It is not intended as a substitute for the CCEYA and does not constitute legal or professional advice.

Licensees and applicants are responsible for acting in accordance with the CCEYA and its regulations.