

Child Care Visit Quick Tips

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) is committed to protecting the health of providers, children and licensing staff during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Striving to do so, emergency policies and procedures have been developed to do the work of licensing in a different way. The emergency policies and procedures will address:

- Initial Applications
- Initial to Non-Expiring Requirements
- Monitor visits
- Moves

For at least the coming year, these procedures will be used by licensing staff. There are some terms that, for the purposes of this process, have specific meaning:

- **Virtual Visit:** Is when a DCYF licensor inspects the child care facility while they are physically away from the facility. For a monitor or initial inspection, this would include completing the checklist.
- **Virtual Platform:** Is the method used to inspect the child care facility without being onsite. These platforms **are not** intended to record the inspection but instead be a live view that allows the licensor to see the facility. FaceTime, Zoom and WebEx are examples of a virtual platform.
- **Health and Safety Verification Visit:** Is when a child care licensing staff goes to the facility to do a walk through/inspection to verify what was seen during the virtual visit.
- **Inspection Report:** Is the report generated by the child care licensor in WA Compass that identifies the WAC that was found out of compliance during any inspection.

- **Technical Assistance:** Information or suggestions provided by the child care licensor to assist the provider in meeting WAC requirements.
- **COVID-19:** (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information online, go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html.

There are some differences between an Initial Licensing Visit, a Monitor and an Initial to Non-Expiring Visit.

- For both an initial and initial to non-expiring, the licensor will send the provider a copy of the initial checklist so the provider can self-assess and outline questions they may have.
- For an initial visit, prior to receiving their first initial license, the Health and Safety Verification visit does not have to be unannounced and may be scheduled at the applicant's convenience.
- During a monitor health and safety verification visit, **only** the items on the sub-checklist **or** immediate risk items will be addressed on the inspection report. All other concerns will be addressed through technical assistance. If a recheck visit is required later, anything found out of compliance at that visit would cause a new inspection report – just as it has since August 2019.

The important thing to remember is that the duties and responsibilities of both providers and licensors have not changed. How the work is done has been adjusted to minimize risk for all.



Child Care Virtual Visits

START

Licensors will contact the child care provider to make arrangements for a **Virtual Visit** and to explain the Virtual Visit process. This includes but is not limited to:

- A time that is convenient for the provider.
- Determining what virtual platform works best for the provider.
- Explaining what the provider could have ready to make the visit move more quickly.
- Explaining how the provider will be able to “show” the licenser different aspects of their program so the checklist can be completed.
- Explaining that the virtual visit will be followed up with an unannounced Health and Safety Verification Visit.

At the agreed upon time, the **Virtual Visit** will be conducted. The appropriate checklist will be completed and, if necessary, an Inspection Report developed. During the visit, the licensor will provide any necessary technical assistance. When the visit is complete, the licensor will send the provider the checklist and the Inspection Report via email. No signature from the provider is collected due to COVID -19 and this will be documented.

The provider retains the right to dispute violations noted on the Inspection Report. They also need to provide verification of any corrections made once they are complete.

Within 30 days (14 days for a Family Home Move), an unannounced **Health and Safety Verification** Visit will be conducted by a licensor. During this visit, the licensor will complete several areas of work with one visit. The licensor will have a short checklist developed from the Virtual Visit that identifies:

- Items from the checklist that could not be seen through the virtual visit due to the limitations of live streaming.
- Items from the checklist that could not be observed (such as labeling bottles, but during the virtual visit, no infants were in care so it couldn't be observed).
- Items from the checklist that were not in compliance.
- Verify any health and safety recheck items identified during virtual visit that were not documented as corrected.

The **Health and Safety Verification Visit** will include:

- Verifying that no one, including the licensor, has known exposure or symptoms of COVID-19.
- A quick walk through of the facility to assure health and safety WACs are met.
- Inspecting anything that could not be seen adequately during the virtual visit.
- A recheck of any non-compliance items that have been corrected from the virtual inspection.

When back at their work station, the licensor will:

- Complete an Inspection Report, if necessary.
- Contact the provider to offer any technical assistance necessary.
- Send via email the shortened checklist and Inspection Report.

If verification of compliance cannot be done through pictures, documents or virtually, the licensor may need to complete another on site visit. This follows the same process that DCYF has followed since August 2019.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov).