

Family Child Care Program Guidelines for Nontraditional Hours for Licensed Programs

Policy: A request to provide care outside the traditional hours of Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., must be staffed for approval with the Licensing Worker and the Family Child Care Licensing Unit.

Becker, Crow Wing, Cass, Douglas, Morrison, Todd, Stevens, and Wadena counties' Child Care Program have developed the following guidelines for the benefit of providers and parents/guardians (guardians for the remainder of this document). Providing care outside of the traditional daytime operating hours presents new challenges and considerations for both guardians and providers, and therefore calls for specialized guidelines for the safe and successful operation.

We have identified the following two shifts to specify various times during the 24-hour day when care may occur:

Traditional hours: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday

Nontraditional hours: 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., Monday through Friday, and all weekends

The following guidelines are intended to apply to any licensed providers in Becker, Crow Wing, Cass, Douglas, Morrison, Todd, Stevens, and Wadena counties' Child Care Program, where the provider has been approved to care for children outside of the traditional hours of program operation (6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday). All portions of Minnesota Rule 9502, and Minnesota Statutes 245A and 245C, which govern normal operation of licensed family child care homes, will be in effect for any nontraditional hours program. This will include annual inspection of the home by a Regional Licensing Specialist.

Any licensed provider considering offering care outside of the traditional day shift hours, or on weekends, must notify their Regional Licensing Specialist to obtain appropriate paperwork, inspections, training, and approval prior to providing such care. Any request to provide care outside the traditional hours of Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., must be staffed for approval with the Licensing Worker and the Family Child Care Licensing Unit. As always, good judgment and parental discretion must play a role in the way care is provided.

Multiple factors are considered during the process of approving a provider for nontraditional hours care, and the same factors may be considered if licensing must reconsider the approval of a provider previously approved for nontraditional hours care. Such factors include, but are not limited to, history of previous complaints against a provider, history of correction orders or actions, history of supervision issues, household structure, floor plan or capacity issues, current or potential licensing actions or investigations. Following are guidelines to consider when providing after-hours or nontraditional care and are meant for the protection of both the children in care and the provider.

General operations

1. Applicants/Providers who wish to offer care during nontraditional hours are encouraged to complete a Nontraditional Hours training given by the Regional Licensing Specialist.

2. Providers who have a license that is currently under any type of investigation or licensing action or potential licensing action, including investigations of household members or staff that may result in a licensing action will not be approved to provide care during nontraditional hours or prior approval will be rescinded.
3. Becker, Crow Wing, Cass, Douglas, Morrison, Todd, Stevens and Wadena counties' Child Care Program does not recommend that a provider work more than 12 hours within any 24-hour period. This includes all types of employment. If a provider's hours of care extend beyond the 12-hour limit, the provider is recommended to use a helper or a co-applicant. **NOTE: a helper between the ages of 13 and 17 must always be supervised and may not be left alone in charge of the children in care.**
4. The provider must consider the needs of her/his own family and the potential for interaction between family members and children in the child care. Additionally, the provider must ensure that no television, videotape, music, or other media that are inappropriate for children are allowed while children are present. Special attention must be paid to non-family members who are in the home visiting while child care is in operation. Persons age 13 and older who are in the home on a regular basis or who may have direct or unsupervised contact with children in care will be subject to a background study (including criminal and social service checks).
5. Providers will be highly encouraged to provide the Regional Licensing Specialist with a written plan to manage enrollment during shift changes so that over-capacity violation/s during shift change does not occur.

Supervision & provider policies

1. Children always need to be within sight or hearing of the licensed provider. Providers are highly encouraged to sleep on the same floor as sleeping children and must always be able to intervene if needed by a child. Infant monitors may be used to monitor infants if they are sleeping in an area other than directly where the provider is located.
2. Providers considering offering care during nontraditional hours are encouraged to develop a special contract with parents that will specifically address these guidelines. Parents must be provided with a signed copy of the contract, as well as a copy of these guidelines, and all Provider Policies required by MN Rule 9502, including chemical use/abuse policies, grievance procedures, maltreatment policies, and complaint policies. The Regional Licensing Specialist will obtain an updated copy on file.
3. Providers are directed to use "911" for emergencies, or call Becker, Crow Wing, Cass, Douglas, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena counties' Child Care Program Emergency Social Services (after hours) Line in the event of a child protection emergency (see resource guide for each counties number). A clear policy on handling emergency situations must be developed for each child. As per MN Rule 9502, providers are expected to contact the Regional Licensing Specialist immediately after the situation to report the emergency or child protection issue.

4. It is recommended that parents and providers communicate about specific needs of the child at bedtime, any medical or physical problems which may be of concern at night, as well as both parents' and provider's expectations of the nontraditional hours care.
5. Parents should be consulted regarding their child's bedtime routine. Provider should make every effort to honor parents' wishes regarding bedtime routines and rituals. **NOTE: NO CHILD SHALL SHARE A BED AT ANY TIME WITH ANYONE (ADULT OR CHILD) FOR ANY REASON.**
6. Provider should consult with parents regarding their child's eating patterns. Children arriving prior to 7 p.m., should have had an evening meal (either at home or at child care). An evening snack may be offered prior to bedtime.

Health & sanitation

1. Children 24 months and older should be afforded privacy for changing and sleeping. Children should not share a bed, crib, or cot for sleeping. Children should have bedtime clothing to wear for sleeping. Children should not sleep in regular clothing at bedtime.
2. Children 24 months and older should be afforded privacy for toileting and bathing. Children should not share a bathroom or bathtub at the same time. Bathroom and bathtub must be cleaned after each child's use.
3. Each child must have his/her own cot, bed, or crib, outfitted with appropriate bedding for comfortable sleeping. All equipment used for sleeping should be in good operating condition, not under recall and free of defects. Children should not sleep on the floor during overnight care. Bedding must be washed at least weekly, or more often if soiled or wet. Cots, beds, or cribs must be placed in a manner to allow for a clear aisle with unimpeded access for adults or children on one side.
4. Minnesota Statutes 245A.146 requires providers to annually check the CPSC website to ensure that all cribs accessible to children in the child care meet all current standards, are not under recall, and are free of defects. The provider must also maintain documentation that he/she has reviewed the website. Additionally, under Minnesota Statutes 245A.146, providers must complete and document a monthly safety inspection of all accessible cribs in the child care residence.
5. Each child should have his/her own personal washcloth, towel, toothbrush and bedding.
6. Nightlights or dim lighting are recommended to be used when children are sleeping overnight. If possible, children should sleep on the same level on which the bathroom is located.

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County Supervisor Signature	Date	Provider Signature	Date
_____	_____		
Regional Licensing Specialist	Date		

The following resources were used in the development of this document: Minnesota Rule 9502, Minnesota Rule 9503, Minnesota Statutes 245A, Minnesota Statutes 245C, Region 5 (Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena) Counties Guidelines for After-Hours Child Care Programs. This document is provided to offer recommendations for providers and parents to guide nontraditional hours care situations. It is not intended to set forth policy, however, recommendations contained within this document reflect thoughtful consideration of licensing rules, general safety and comfort issues for children, and a review of supervision and other rule violations which resulted in negative licensing actions.