

August, 2011

Dear Colleague:

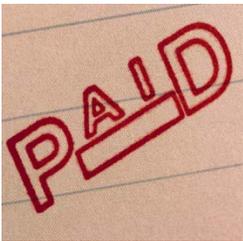
I am hoping you are enjoying the summer weather and participating in fun outdoor activities with the children in your care. Hopefully, this letter will only take a moment of your time and will keep you informed about a few important topics.



The Benefits of Influenza Immunizations

An amendment to the public health law (PHL) § 613 requires schools and licensed and registered child care programs to post influenza educational material, beginning this fall, in plain view, within their programs. This requirement was put in place to raise awareness about the importance of immunizing children against influenza. Along with this letter is a ***Seasonal Flu Guide for Parents***. This document speaks to parents and guardians and addresses why seasonal influenza is serious, signs of influenza and how to protect your child from influenza by getting vaccinated. Your program is welcome to post this document along with any other information you find useful beginning in August 2011. For more information visit:

http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/immunization/recommended_vaccinations.htm.



The New, Automated Child Care Time and Attendance System

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services is proud to announce that an automated statewide Child Care Time and Attendance (CCTA) system is now available to providers of child care in all social service districts outside of New York City. This system allows child care providers to track the attendance of children who receive child care subsidy and electronically submit their bills to the local social service districts for payment.

What are the benefits for providers using CCTA system?

- Reduces the amount of paperwork a provider needs to complete for billing;
- Improves the accuracy and speed of child care subsidy payments; and
- Providers may submit bills electronically to the local social services district ;

- Providers save money on postage by submitting their attendance electronically;
- Parents may check their child in and out on the child care facility computer (this takes less than 10 seconds);
- Allows providers to see when children in their care are no longer eligible for child care subsidy.

What equipment is needed to use CCTA?

- CCTA does not require that you purchase software;
- Providers will need a **desktop or notebook computer that can access the Internet** by using any of the following web browsers: Internet Explorer (IE); Firefox, Chrome or Safari.

What if a provider does not have a computer?

- The Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) has grants up to \$500 to help registered family and licensed group family child care providers outside of New York City purchase a computer.
- The CSEA/VOICE website at <http://www.voicecsea.org/grant/> includes the following contact information for the grants: toll free at **855.GRANT4U (855.472.6848)** or email at grant4u@cseainc.org.

To find out more information about CCTA and how to participate please contact your local social services district and visit <http://ccta-newyork.com/>.



Social Services Law Prohibits Municipalities from Regulating Home-Based Child Care Providers

The Office of Children and Family Services is aware that some local municipalities may be attempting to regulate home-based child care providers. It has been reported to this office that a number of municipalities may be charging a fee for providers to have a sign, to register their businesses with their office and to apply for parking spaces. It is the opinion of this office that local municipalities **may not** engage in these activities.

Section 390(12) of the Social Services Law (SSL) prohibits local municipalities from imposing any requirements on family-based providers that are not also required of all residents. Local zoning laws and other local ordinances cannot impede, restrict, or prohibit family or group family day care homes in one- or two-family dwellings or in multiple dwellings.

Municipalities can exercise jurisdiction over the family or group family day care home in regard to building and fire code issues but cannot impose upon family or group family day care homes requirements that are not applicable to all residential dwellings in the same class as the dwelling in which the family or group family day care home is located. Special rules cannot be created and enforced upon family or group family day care homes.

If you believe your town, city or county is imposing requirements on your home, based on the fact that you are operating a child care program, please contact your licensor or registrar and, if appropriate, your union representative for more information.



The new Social Services laws changed licensing and registration periods from two years to four years, but your 30 hours of required training is still on a two-year cycle. Thirty hours of training is required every two years. If you haven't done so already, check out the Division's free training courses at: <http://www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu/elearn.shtm>.



On-Line Training Must be Pre-Approved

All distance learning (on-line) courses that child care employees take toward meeting their required 30 hours of training every **two years**, must be pre-approved, this includes CPR and First Aid training. The list of pre-approved training courses can be found at: <http://www.tsg.suny.edu/ocfsdlc.shtm> or by calling your licensor or registrar.



Smoke Alarms: They Can Only Save Your Life If They Are Present and Functional

Did you know that most smoke alarms have an expiration date? The older they are, the less effective they become. A date is printed or stamped on the back of the alarm. Experts recommend buying a new one if the date is 10 years or older. Remember to check the batteries as well. Research by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) indicates that while 94% of American homes have at least one smoke alarm, more than 1/3 are inoperable because of dead or missing batteries. Stay safe!

I hope you find this information useful. Have a safe and enjoyable rest of the summer.

Sincerely,

Janice M. Molnar Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services