

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL UPDATE

Children's Residential Licensing Program Mission:

To protect and improve the lives of all children who reside in a community care facility through the administration of a transparent licensing system that is collaborative, fair, and supportive of families.

A Note from

Kevin Gaines, Deputy Director

Welcome to our Fall Children's Residential Program (CRP) Quarterly Update. This fall is much like last fall due to the rise of new COVID-19 variants sweeping through the country. The last two years have been unquestionably challenging, but it is thanks to our families, provider staff, county staff, CRP staff, and stakeholders that we are finding new and creative solutions that enable us to continue to provide quality care to children.

Many of the restrictions from the executive actions put in place since March 2020 to help facilitate a coordinated response to the pandemic are relaxing. To this effect, some of the [Provider Information Notices](#) (PINs) that were released during quarantine that gave stakeholders and CRP unique permissions, waivers, and exceptions to typical operations have already begun to wind down or have already expired. (Others, however, have been or may be extended depending on the pace of the pandemic, vaccination rates amongst Californians of all ages, and other factors.) Many of these already ended in June and July, and more will sunset in September. CRP will release additional PINs as future modifications are made.

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The distance learning statute ended on June 30th, meaning that many schools will be fully reopening this fall while others may be continuing a hybrid system or provide exceptions for some students to continue distance learning. Some schools, of course, may also continue full time distance learning. Know that our staff are here to assist you with any concerns you might have. Please be advised that many schools may continue requiring masks for in-classroom learning.

In July, CRP also launched new inspection tools, the Compliance and Regulatory Enforcement (CARE) Tools (previously known as IPP Tools), to improve the consistency, effectiveness, and quality of the inspection process across all licensed facility categories. For CRP, CARE Tools were

developed and have been implemented for Small Family Homes, Group Homes, Foster Family Agencies, Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs, and Transitional Housing Placement Programs. You can read more about the tools and the IPP project in [PIN 21-20-CRP](#).

Lastly, vaccination eligibility opened for minors 12 years of age and older. It is highly recommended that all eligible children receive the vaccine for their own safety as well as the safety of others. Licensees can also read more about testing and vaccinations for their staffs in [PIN 21-23-CRP](#). My sincere thanks to everyone involved with the care of our most vulnerable Californians.

Fire Safety Reminders

Children's residential facilities must maintain a working smoke and carbon monoxide detector in addition to a fully charged fire extinguisher. As a best practice, schedule drills around the time smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are tested for functionality. In view of wildfire season, having extra facemasks and air purifiers make help ensure the health of children and staff.

The [Office of the State Fire Marshal \(OSFM\)](#) can serve as a valuable resource for fire safety information. OSFM posts [bulletins](#) with critical information such as smoke and carbon monoxide recalls.

Providers are encouraged to review the following sections of Title 22 Regulations and Interim Licensing Standards relating to fire safety:

Group Homes & STRTPs

[Title 22 Section 84087\(d\) – Buildings and Grounds](#)

[STRTP Interim Licensing Standards Section 87087\(d\) – Buildings and Grounds](#)

Resource Family Homes

[FFA Interim Licensing Standards Section 88487.1\(a\)\(2\) – Home and Grounds](#)

California's Pandemic EBT Card (P-EBT)

P-EBT is a federal food program. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE), received approval to operate the program in response to COVID-19 related school and child care facility closures.

P-EBT provides food benefits to help families with young children (aged 0-6) who received Cal-Fresh Food benefits between October 2020 and May 2021. Included also are school aged children who were eligible for free or reduced-price school meals through the federal School Breakfast or National School Lunch Program for school year 2020-21. The children are assumed to have attended school via distance learning at least some of that time.

P-EBT 2.0 cards for eligible young children will be automatically mailed beginning early July 2021 through August 2021. P-EBT cards for eligible school age children will be mailed beginning early August 2021 through November 2021. Cards will be mailed by age group in alphabetical order based on the first name of the eligible child. There is NO P-EBT 2.0 application process. Visit the [P-EBT website](#) or call the P-EBT helpline at 877-328-9677 for more information.

Guardian: A New Background Check System

The Care Provider Management Bureau has launched *Guardian*, a new background check system for all Regional Offices, agencies, and applicants to assist in the background check process. *Guardian* ensures background checks are completed faster and more efficiently while making the process easier for applicants and agencies to request exemptions. Provided below are links to obtain more information on *Guardian*.

- For useful Guardian training tools, please visit the [Guardian Webpage](#).
- For Customer Service please contact the [Guardian email](#) box or call (888) 422-5669.
- For login assistance please contact, [Guardian Login Support](#).

Keeping Up with COVID-19 Updates

An important way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 is to stay informed about the changing guidelines and requirements as we learn more about the disease. Administrators and staff should be particularly knowledgeable about the requirements concerning the wearing of masks, social distancing, quarantining, planning outings, holding visitations, and testing.

It is also important to keep the children and their families informed of COVID-related updates. Providers should have a system in place to easily pass along such information. These may include e-mails, newsletters or phone messages. The following are links that can help you stay up to date:

[Provider Information Notices \(PINs\)](#)
[California Department of Public Health](#)
[Center for Disease Control](#)

The requirements from various sources may be different. Be sure to consult your licensing Regional Office for clarification in order to ensure operational compliance.

Planning Ahead to Ensure Sufficient Staff Coverage

The holidays are a wonderful time of year, but the season also comes with the challenge of having adequate staff coverage necessary to meet children's needs. While everyone enjoys having this celebratory time with loved ones, it also means that people are more likely to take time off work. It's up to the facility to find ways to keep staff motivated and allow staff time off while meeting children's care needs. Here are some things to consider when staffing the facility for the holiday season:

- **Start Planning Early** – Being well prepared and starting early can help minimize potential staffing shortages. This also allows for staff to make alternative holiday plans with friends and family if they are working on a holiday.
- **Stagger the Schedule** – Consider staggering the employee schedule. This allows for alternating holidays worked by staff at the facility and avoids the problem of the same staff having to work every holiday.
- **On-Site Management** – Having a manager's presence at the facility to provide support will also help improve overall morale for the staff.
- **Determine Staffing Needs** – Think about any new needs that must be met that might require adjustment of staffing levels. This may include factors related to COVID-19, increased acuity levels, or accommodating visitors.

- **Hiring Additional Staff** – Work on staff recruitment and hiring, including seasonal hiring options. This takes planning and is best not left to the last minute or during a shortage.
- **Celebrate!** – The holidays are a special time so create a festive atmosphere with yearly traditions. Decorate the facility and plan fun activities with staff and the children. Consider providing a holiday meal, home baked goods, or small gifts to express gratitude to staff.

Licenseses of group homes and Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP) may wish to review the following sections of Title 22 Regulations and Interim Licensing Standards relating to appropriate care and supervision:

Group Homes & STRTPs

[Title 22 Section 80065\(a\) – Personnel Requirements](#)

[Title 22 Section 84065.2\(b\)\(1\) – Personnel Duties](#) (Group Homes Only)

[STRTP Interim Licensing Standards Section 87065\(g\) – Personnel Requirements](#)

Tips for a Safe Halloween

While the [Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#) must be applied, tips from sources like [Love to Know](#) (below) can also be useful:

- [Look for Flame-Retardant Costumes](#)
Fire is one of the biggest Halloween dangers you should consider.
- [Make Sure Children Can See Clearly](#)
Some masks can dangerously interfere with a children’s ability to see clearly.
- [Keep Costumes Short](#)
Keeping costumes short will help prevent tripping hazards as trick-or-treaters are running up steps and across streets.
- [Choose Safe Props](#)
Props such as toy guns, knives or swords can be mistaken for real weapons.
- [Ensure Costumes Are Visible at Night](#)
Placing some reflective tape on darker costumes will help make children more visible, as will carrying a flashlight. The safest time for trick or treating is during daylight hours.
- [Don't Go Alone](#)
Children of any age should not go trick-or-treating alone. Stay in populated and lighted areas.
- [Consider COVID Safety](#)
Halloween masks are not substitutes for proper facemasks. In addition, consider COVID infection levels in the area before trick-or-treating. Plan alternative ways to celebrate when prudent.

Administrator Certification Program Fee Increases

[PIN 21-11-CCLD](#) provides information about fee changes that affect prospective and certified administrators of Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, Adult Residential Facilities, Group Homes, and Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs and Administrator Certification Program training vendors. These fee changes became effective July 1, 2021.

Active Shooter/Attacker Preparedness

The following are some basic physical safety tips to keep in mind this holiday season, especially when planning family or group outings to popular shopping destinations or recreational points of interest. This is in light of recent events that have involved individuals targeting members of the public at random with the use of firearms or other weapons.

- Be aware of your surroundings and assess for any potential risks to your personal safety and of those accompanying you.
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit or a viable area in which to seek shelter in case of an emergency.
- If you happen to be in an office during an active shooter/attacker incident, stay there and secure the door.
- If you are out in a hallway during such an occurrence, get into a room and secure the door.
- Call 911 when it is safe to do so.

For additional information, please consult the Department of Homeland Security [website](#). We have also included a link to an instructional video, [Run, Hide, Fight: Surviving an Active Shooter Event](#), prepared by [Ready Houston](#).

New Assistant Deputy Director

We are pleased to announce the selection of Vicki Smith as Assistant Deputy Director, Residential Programs, for the Community Care Licensing Division. In this new role, Vicki will assume policy and operational responsibility for the Adult and Senior Care, Children's Residential, and Home Care Services Programs.

Vicki has served as the Program Administrator for the CCLD Adult and Senior Care Program since May 2020. Prior to her tenure in CDSS, Vicki worked in the human services field for over 25 years, primarily in sectors serving people with disabilities. For many of those years, she was the Government and Public Affairs Liaison for a state-contracted agency serving people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. She has led teams in for-profit, non-profit, and government sectors, with a shared purpose of systems improvement and smooth coordination of care.

Vicki earned her Ph.D. from Loma Linda University in Social Policy and Social Research, where she focused on developing a values-based leadership model.

Please join us in congratulating Vicki on her appointment, effective July 19, 2021.

Community Care Licensing Career Opportunities

Are you interested in becoming part of the Community Care Licensing team? Information on how to apply for a state job can be found at the [CalCareers Website](#). Apply at [CalCareers](#).



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS	
Centralized Complaint & Information Bureau	1-844-538-8766
Administrator Certification Section	1-916-653-9300
Foster Care Rates	1-916-651-9152
Care Provider Management Bureau (CPMB)	1-888-422-5669
Foster Care Ombudsman	1-877-846-1602
CCL Public Inquiry and Response	1-916-651-8848
Technical Support Program	1-916-654-1541

Program Administrator

Jean Chen

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The Children's Residential Program Quarterly Update is a collaborative publication of the CCLD Children's Residential Program and Technical Assistance and Advocacy Bureau (TAAB). To provide feedback or suggest articles, e-mail TAAB at technicalsupportprogram@dss.ca.gov