



Saipan Town Hall Meeting at Kagman



The second Saipan Town Hall meeting was held on Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at Kagman Elementary School. In attendance were 12 providers and individuals including Acting Secretary of DCCA – Ms. Vivian T. Sablan and the Administrator of the Child Care Development Fund, Ms. Maribel Loste.

The purpose of the town hall meeting was to provide a forum for public discussion on the Child Care Standards Act of 1985. The intent is to update the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code; T-55 Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Subchapter 55-40.

Given the small number of participants representing 3 different groups and to allow for active engagement, the moderator set up a focus group and a brief report back from each group after 30 minutes of discussion. The three groups include:

1. Day Care Provider – moderated by Rita A. Sablan and Gregoria Admed
2. Family Child Care Home – moderated by Gordon B. Salas and Maribel Loste
3. Independent Contractors – moderated by Herman T. Guererro and Liz D. Rechebei

The attendees raised the following questions and comments:

1. Day Care Provider

Reference: Part 200 Day Care Center & Group Child Care Homes, Before and After School Programs Subpart B: Program Requirements
§ 55-40.1-220 Communications with Parents and Caregivers

Comment: There are no issues to raised but wanted to comment of the best practice that is instituted at the Day Care where my child goes as it relates to parent communication. As a consumer, this section of the regulation is excellent as the communication with parents and caregivers allows me to get regular updates, notices and memorandum from CCDF, CCLP and reminder notices. The day care center where my child goes to uses an app called Brightwheel which keeps me alert on school notices at all times.

2. Family Child Care Home

Question: Can you clarify the Child Care Licensing Program process for those providers that have been recognized as license exempt by the Child Care Development Fund?

Response: The administrative process for license-exempt should be the following:

1. CCLP receives a completed application;
2. CCLP Safety Inspector reviews the application and determines if the applicant is subject to the child care licensing regulation or not (caring for 4 children or less);
3. Once the Safety Inspectors makes a determination that the applicant is exempted from the licensing regulation, he/she will communicate such finds to the CCLP Supervisor; and

4. CCLP Supervisor will prepare an official letter informing the applicant that after a thorough review, the applicant is not subject (exempted) to the child care regulations.

3. *Independent Contractors*

Questions/Answers/Comments:

- a. Group care in hotel is necessary to be licensed given that care givers are able to take care of children while parents are away from the hotel site. An example of licensed child care programs in hotel establishments are available in Las Vegas.
- b. What are the additional fees if they are to become licensed? Fees have been established by categories. See listings below:

§ 55-40.1-105 Fees

- (a) The appropriate application fee outlined in this section must be submitted to the Department with the application for a child care license at least sixty calendar days prior to the opening date of the facility.
- (b) The appropriate application fee outlined in this section must be submitted to the Department annually, at least sixty calendar days prior to the expiration date of the license, along with a completed continuation declaration.
- (c) Following is a schedule of original, annual and renewal fees for all types of child care facilities and agencies:

Type and Fee

Initial/Renewal (1-6 children) \$25

Day Care Centers, Group Child Care, Infant/Toddler Care, and Before and after School Programs

Type Fee

Initial / Renewal (5-20 children) \$75

Initial / Renewal (21-50 children) \$100

Initial / Renewal (51-100 children) \$125

Initial / Renewal (101-150 children) \$150

Initial / Renewal (151-250 children) \$175

Initial / Renewal (251 or more children) \$200

Changes to Licenses

(capacity and/or number of children) \$15

Duplicate Licenses \$10

Annual Listing Fee \$20

- c. Register with CCLP

- a. Question: What are the health and safety requirements?

Answer: The health and safety standards for Family Child Care Home can be found in the following sections of the Administrative Code:

- i. Subpart E - Health Standards for Provider and Others in the Home
- ii. Subpart F - Environmental Health Standards
- iii. Subpart G - Physical Facility Standards

- b. Question: What documents will be used to inspect centers?

Answer: The Child Care Licensing Program has a monitoring checklist that has been developed and revised in 2022 for the purpose of inspecting and monitoring health and safety requirements. This monitoring checklist is available for review. Meanwhile, the CCLP will also be updating this checklist based on new updates in the regulations.

- c. Comment from provider: Family Child Care Home is exempted from fire and health inspection but required to have a fire extinguisher in the home, which must also be monitored and inspected.

d. Emergency Preparedness and Recovery

- a. Question: What are the regulations at the state level by Homeland Security?

Answer: The CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) was established by Public Law 18-4 to protect lives and property by effectively preparing for preventing, responding to and receiving from all threats, crimes, hazards, and emergencies by coordinating the efforts of the first response community to effectively manage incidents, and to collaborate with public, private and community partnerships (2021, CNMI Citizen Centric Report). The Commonwealth Code delineating their duties and responsibilities can be found in https://cnmilaw.org/pdf/cmc_section/T1/20143.pdf

- b. Comment from group: Trainings are made available to family child care home providers on emergency drill kit, fire drills, and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)