

WASHOE COUNTY CHILD CARE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

DATE: March 2, 2022

PLACE: Washoe County Commissioners' Chambers and via Zoom

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Kristin Mareno, For Profit Child Care Provider (Center)
Julietta Ferraren, Recipient of Child Care Services
Brett Lee, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
Tiffany Dyer, Nevada State Division of Child and Family Services
Lindsey Klaes, Washoe County Human Services Agency (Chair Person)

MEMBERS

PRESENT

VIA ZOOM: Hayley Hamel, Child Development Specialist
Ryan Putzer, For Profit Child Care Provider (Center)
Harmony Shreve, For Profit Child Care (Home)
Alexis Erlach, Recipient of Child Care Services
Candace Dietrich, Recipient of Child Care
Chris McCubbins, Sparks Fire Department
Kellissa Shirane, Washoe County Health Department

Item 1: Roll Call

Roll Call was completed. There were five board members present in person and six members present via Zoom.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes of March 10, 2021 and September 15, 2021 Meetings

Meeting minutes for both March 10, 2021 and September 15, 2021 were approved.

Item 3: Board Positions

Washoe County Human Services Agency (WCHSA) will be recruiting for Kim Franchi's vacated position, as it has not yet been filled. Ms. Franchi's absence also leaves the chairperson position vacant. Election of the chairperson position can be decided at the September 2022 meeting. Alexis Erlach has requested to continue her service on the board for another term. All board members agreed, and the board is happy to have Ms. Erlach serving another term. Her expiration date will now be June 2026.

Item 4: Regulation 17.5 - Independent Contractors in Presence of Employee

Ms. Klaes spoke with the State of Nevada earlier this year and received confirmation that the Agency **can** make an exception to the requirement of having Independent Contractors supervised within centers, as long as they have met all initial training, TB test, and background check requirements that a staff member would require. The Regulation title was changed to

“Independent Contractors” from “Lack of Valid Work Permit”, as that title no longer applied due to previous regulation changes. Regulation 17.15.A was added that indicates that an Independent Contractor who has completed the necessary 23 hours of initial training requirements and a comprehensive background check meets the criteria. Those Independent Contractors who have met those criteria would **not** require direct supervision by a staff member of a childcare facility. Hayley Hamel asked for confirmation and clarification about Independent Contractors only needing the initial training. Ms. Klaes confirmed that yes, at this time, per the State of Nevada, Independent Contractors would only need the initial training requirements. Motion to approve this update was made, and Ms. Klaes will submit the approved regulation to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

Item 5: Regulations Updates

Ms. Klaes discussed the new comprehensive background clearance process that has replaced the work permit card. The prior work permit process did not meet the criteria for the federal comprehensive background requirements put in place in the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2014. In order to come into compliance with previously waived background check requirements, background checks are now conducted through the Nevada Department of Public Safety and the State of Nevada Child Care Licensing Division. Work Permits were removed from the Washoe County Code as a condition to work in child care via an ordinance change approved by the Board of County Commissioners on February 8, 2022. The Washoe County child care regulations affected by this process change are section numbers 1, 6, 16, 17, 21 and 31. See regulation sections 1.16, 1.23, 6.7, 6.8, 16.1, 17.15, 21.2.C, and 31.5. Each proposed regulation change was reviewed by the Board and approved for submission to the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

Item 6: Department Update (Lindsey Klaes)

The first department update pertains to the new background check process. Ms. Klaes expressed her appreciation with everyone’s patience regarding this new background clearance process, as it is a big change with a lot of growing pains for everyone.

Ms. Klaes advised there were no staff updates, no vacancies, or openings within the childcare licensing department.

Ms. Klaes discussed the change regarding child care providers now needing inter-connected smoke detectors based on the currently adopted fire Code. Ms. Klaes advised that Children’s Cabinet has grant funding available for child care providers to apply for financial assistance to help with coming into compliance with this new requirement. The grant will not require a documented non-compliance on an inspection in order to be eligible for funding, as the requirement is based on a licensing policy change. Board member Brett Lee, with Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), advised that he believes the Red Cross is also able to assist with providing the inter-connected smoke detectors.

Ms. Klaes mentioned that the next update had to do with the regulation 24.4 regarding staff to child home ratios. She reported that in the past, this regulation had been misinterpreted, but it has been clarified by Nevada Child Care Licensing that a home provider may care for two children under the age of one year, with a maximum of four children under the age of **three** years. Previously, Washoe County licensing enforced a maximum of four children under the age of two. Washoe County is required to meet the standards set by State of Nevada Licensing, as Washoe County can be more restrictive, but not less restrictive, than State Child Care Licensing. Harmony Shreve said she knows of a few home providers who have expressed their opinion and frustration about that change and advised that a lot of providers are preferring to just go unlicensed. Ms. Klaes discussed that this regulation is written into the Nevada Revised Statute, and as such, any change would require a legislation change. Ms. Klaes suggested that providers wanting to discuss the impact of the ratio could do so by contacting their Assembly person. Ms. Klaes advised people could search online to find out who their assigned Assembly person is. Ms. Klaes also wanted to let members and providers know that the ratio change was written in line with a federal requirement from the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2014 and guidance from The Administration of Children & Families, and that the State of Nevada was required to come into compliance with this federal requirement.

Item 7: Next Meeting Date September 21, 2022, from 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.

The next Washoe County Child Care Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2022, from 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.

Item 8: Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

Joanne Palmer, Owner, and Director of Caughlin Preschool, came to the podium to express her frustration with the new childcare comprehensive background clearance process. She is fearful it is scaring people away due to how many steps there are, and she wondered if there is a possibility of online payments to help reduce some of the steps in the new process. Joanne also expressed her concern about the security of people carrying around their fingerprint card with their fingerprints on them and all their personal information.

Ms. Klaes read aloud four letters the Agency received from Washoe County home child care providers, who requested the letters be shared at this meeting. Each letter relayed the challenge and financial impact that the ratio changes have caused for home providers.

Julietta Ferraren discussed that recent regulation changes have significantly impacted licensed providers and how the Agency is addressing unlicensed childcare. Ms. Klaes advised that if the Agency receives a complaint of unlicensed childcare being conducted, the Agency does go out and investigate. If unlicensed care is founded, the person is issued a notice of violation and offered the opportunity to become licensed if they qualify. The Agency does have the ability to issue a citation or an administrative fine to those who continue providing unlicensed childcare and refuse to become licensed.

Unfortunately, the Agency does not always know about every person who is providing unlicensed care.

The meeting was adjourned.