

TALKING POINTS FOR TEACHER CREDENTIAL RULE REVISION

RULE 591-1-.31 Staff – Effective December 1, 2012, **directors and lead teachers** must have credentials in early childhood education. This requirement does not apply to assistant directors, assistant teachers, cooks, bus drivers, or persons providing indirect care to children. Note: School age only programs are required to have at least one staff member that meets the education credential requirements at all times.

Based on current research on child development and early childhood settings, this rule was enacted to improve the quality of early childhood programs by focusing on the critical skills and education of the teachers and directors necessary to provide quality education for young children.

This rule becomes effective **December 2012**. Because this educational requirement is new for child care providers, there was a three year time-frame allowing child care professionals adequate time to obtain one of the newly required credentials. Since the initial rule revision in 2009, many supports have been put in place to assist directors and lead teachers in locating the credential, certificate, diploma or degree she/he feels best meets her/his needs.

Directors and teachers have a range of credential options. Directors and teachers will have options they can select to satisfy the credential requirement. There are slight differences in the requirements of directors and lead teachers including qualifying experience.

DIRECTORS' EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience
- Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Infant/Toddler, School Age/Youth Care or Program Administration **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience
- Technical College Diploma (TCD) in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Infant/Toddler, School Age/Youth Care or Program Administration **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience
- 40 hour Director Training course approved by Department **PLUS** minimum five (5) years employment as an on-site child care learning center or group day care home director.
- Associate Degree in early Childhood Education, Child Development or a related field **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience
- Paraprofessional Certificate **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience
- 15 Semester hours or 25 Quarter hours of Early Childhood Education or Child Development from an accredited college or university **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience

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- Bachelors or Master's degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child Development from an accredited college or university
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a field other than ECE or Child Development **PLUS** three (3) months of qualifying child care experience
- Montessori diploma from a Nationally accredited organization **PLUS** six (6) months of qualifying child care experience

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Assistant Directors are not required to meet the new credential requirement. Assistant Directors can be in the program in charge without the Director present **.

The assistant director is not required to meet the educational credential requirement set forth for lead teachers and directors. Assistant directors will have no additional requirements when they fill in for brief periods for the director. The assistant director can be solely responsible for the child care facility for brief periods, such as:

- Before and after the director's normal work hours
- The director's vacation
- a sick day for the Director

****NOTE:** Each facility must have at least one director who meets the educational requirements. If a program has co-directors at least one of those directors must meet the requirement.

Even though the new credential requirement does not apply to assistant teachers, many may wish to meet the requirement for future advancement into the director role. The 40-Hour Director's Training is available to anyone. Assistant directors who have worked in child care five years or longer and chose to meet the educational requirement (not required) can take the training to meet the educational requirement.

CCS (NON-PRE-K) LEAD TEACHERS' EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition (PDR Career Level 4);
- Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) (PDR Career Level 5) in
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Child Development
 - Infant and Toddler

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- Program Administration
- School Age and Youth Care
- Technical College Diploma (TCD) in Early Childhood Education/Child Development or a related field (PDR Career Level 6);
- Montessori diploma from a Nationally accredited organization (PDR Career Level 7)
- Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education/ Child Development or a related field (PDR Career Level 7);
- Currently issued PSC Paraprofessional Certificate – **available only to public school/educational programs** – Please note this credential is accepted for those teachers who are currently certified in the public school system and select to leave employment in the school system to work in the private sector as a child care teacher in a non-Pre-K classroom. However, the Paraprofessional certificate cannot be renewed in the non-public school/educational setting, so when it expires, another qualifying credential is required (PDR Career Level 4);
- Twenty-five quarter hours or fifteen semester hours of Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child development coursework from an accredited college or university (PDR Career Level 3/ review of courses required);
- Non-ECE related degree from an accredited college/university (PDR Career Level 4)
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university in ECE /Child Development or a related field (Career Level 8)
- Master's degree from an accredited college or university in ECE /Child Development or a related field (Career Level 10)
- Specialist degree (Ed S) from an accredited college or university in ECE or a related field (Career Level 11)
- Doctorate degree (PhD) from an accredited college or university in ECE/Child Development or a related field (Career Level 12)

ASSISTANT TEACHERS/ CAREGIVER AIDES

Assistant teachers/caregiver aides (in non-Pre-K classrooms) can be in the classroom alone.

The assistant teacher/caregiver is not required to meet the educational credential requirement set forth for lead teachers and directors. Assistant teachers will have no additional requirements when they fill in for brief periods for the lead teacher. ****The assistant teacher can be solely responsible for the classroom for brief periods, such as:**

- Before and after the Lead teacher's normal work hours
- a sick day for the Lead teacher,
- bathroom breaks,
- lunch breaks, and

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- other incidental periods.

****NOTE:** Even though Rules do allow 16 year old caregiver aides, the assistant teacher/caregiver must be 18 years old to be solely responsible for the children in the classroom.

Directors and Teachers have support. Financial support may be provided to teachers through various programs including SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES, HOPE Grants, other grants and incentives.

Note: For further information please refer to

www.decal.ga.gov for details of the rule and an overview of the requirements

www.tcsg.edu for details regarding TCC offerings and colleges within the Technical College System of Georgia at which the TCC, TCD, AAS can be attained

www.cdacouncil.org; for details regarding the requirements and application for the Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate

www.training.decal.ga.gov for a detailed list of approved CDA Trainers and Training in Georgia (for which financial support through SCHOLARSHIPS is available www.caresolutions.com for payment of the application)

www.caresolutions.com for financial support opportunities through INCENTIVES, SCHOLARSHIPS and any additional grant opportunities for Georgia's early childhood workforce