

REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE SETTINGS

Board Meeting – October 11, 2011



**MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care**

Transportation Regulations in Family Child Care; Small Group and School Age and Large Group and School Age Programs - 606 CMR 7.13

1. Written Transportation Plan
2. Parental Consent for Transportation
3. Programs providing or contracting for transportation must:
 - Establish child safety policies & procedures
 - Ensure compliance with ADA and Rehabilitation Act
 - Include any contract with sub-contractor with Transportation Plan
4. Vehicle and Driver Requirements
 - Vehicles carrying 8+ must conform to MA School Bus requirements
 - Vehicles carrying <8 must conform to G.L. c. 90 § 7(D)
 - Must comply with all registration/inspection laws
 - Drivers must be licensed to operate vehicle
 - At least one person on vehicle must be 1st Aid & CPR certified
 - **Driver must take attendance before/after each trip, including complete vehicle inspection after every trip to ensure no one left alone**
5. Insurance Requirements
6. Transportation Safety



Identified Best Practices

“Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards”: published transportation standards in early education settings that address

- Drop-Off and Pick-Up
- Child Passenger Safety

In particular, the Collaboration recommends that:

- A designated staff person should check to ensure all children safely exit the vehicle when it arrives at the designated location (may include use of an attendance list);
- Program staff will keep a record of all children picked up and dropped off and at what time; and
- All vehicles should be locked when not in use, head counts of children should be taken after transporting to prevent a child from being left unintentionally in a vehicle, and children should never be intentionally left in a vehicle unattended.



COMPARISON OF EEC'S REGULATIONS WITH OTHER STATES

Similarities:

- ✓ Written Transportation Plans
- ✓ Driver Requirements
- ✓ Vehicle Requirements Regarding Registration, Inspection and Insurance
- ✓ Vehicle Safety Requirements

Discrepancies/Recommendations:

- Management Responsibility
- Parent Notification Requirement: Child Absences
- Child Safety: Passenger Logs and Secondary Vehicle Inspections
- Child Safety: Vehicle Monitoring Devices/Adult Monitor
- Transportation Performance Standards



Management Responsibility

Provider is responsible for full compliance with transportation laws/policies, **regardless** of how transportation is provided.

Basis: There must be an assumption of responsibility for the child while the child is being transported to and from the child care program as well as during child care hours.

- TN and AR have required this assumption of responsibility of their licensed child care providers through their regulations.
- MADCA articulated that child care provider is responsible for the safety of the child, regardless of how the service is delivered.

Implementation: **Requires regulation change.**

Implications: **Will require additional educator training and monitoring by EEC; additional EEC licensors.**



Parent Notification Requirement

Providers shall notify parents immediately if/when a child does not arrive at child care within 30 minutes of his scheduled arrival time, unless parents have previously notified the program of the child's absence or alternative arrival time.

Basis: Ensures that children are accounted for and promotes accurate attendance. Consistent with best practices.

- WI, OK, and VT have required this assumption of responsibility of their licensed child care providers through their regulations.
- MADCA recommended a policy for enhanced communication within a defined time limit of a child's expected arrival.

Implementation: **Transportation policy needed with eventual regulation change.**

Implications: **Will require additional educator training and monitoring by EEC; additional EEC licensors.**



Passenger Log and Secondary Vehicle Inspection

The driver shall carry and complete a passenger log for each route, identifying the name of each child transported, the time picked up, the time dropped off and initialed by the educator or parent/guardian. The driver shall sign the passenger log at the conclusion of the route, certifying completion of the inspection of each seat, surface area, etc. If a monitor is required on the vehicle, the driver shall give the passenger log to the monitor (or additional reviewer, if no monitor is required and vehicle is not equipped with a vehicle monitoring device), who shall physically inspect the vehicle in the same fashion and sign off.

Basis: Ensures that no children are inadvertently left on vehicle. Ensures that drivers physically walk through vehicle as required and that vehicle is safe and in operable condition.

Implementation: **No regulation change or contract amendment required. Transportation policy needed.**

Implications: **Will require monitoring by EEC and/or an oversight entity; additional EEC licensors and contract monitors.**



Vehicle Monitoring Devices or Adult Monitor

All vehicles designed to transport 6+ children shall be equipped with monitoring devices approved by the State that prompt staff to inspect. Vehicle monitoring devices are **not required** for vehicles that carry an assigned monitor, that only transport school aged children, unless the children are developmentally or physically disabled or on vehicles that are only used for occasional field trips or other similar trips.

Basis: Ensures that no children are inadvertently left on vehicle. Ensures that drivers physically walk through vehicle as required.

Implementation: **Requires regulation change and contract amendment.**

Implications: **Cost implications for transportation providers.**
Will require on-site, periodic monitoring by EEC and/or an oversight entity; additional EEC contract monitors.



Transportation Performance Standards

Develop customized transportation performance standards, based upon those created by the Human Service Transportation (HST) Office of EOHHS, to be incorporated into all EEC contracts for transportation services. Standards must be adhered to by all transportation providers and are applicable to all Family Child Care Systems/Providers.

Basis: Provides defined expectations of transportation services and responsibilities of contractors and subcontractors for transportation services.

Implementation: **Requires contract amendment.**
Requires acknowledgment that standards have been read by Transportation Provider, Early Education and Care Provider and Family Child Care System, if applicable.

Implications: **Will require monitoring by EEC staff and/or an oversight entity; additional EEC contract monitors.**

