

## Utah - Child Care Licensing Program Temporary Operation Standards

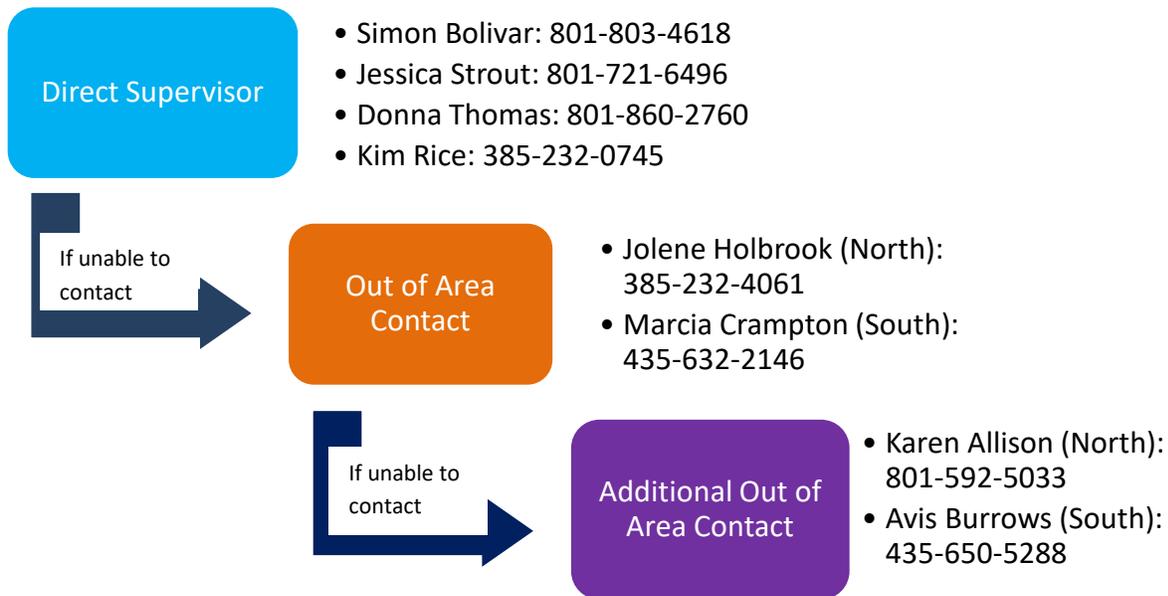
The goal of this temporary operation plan is to incorporate easy-to-follow steps to help provide continuity of care and the support providers may need to protect the health and safety of children in child care.

Natural disasters are increasing in frequency. Utah has experienced climatic events, such as tornadoes and flooding, that have wreaked havoc on the community and interrupted the daily operations of citizen's lives. It is anticipated that a major seismic event, such as an earthquake, will likely occur in the not too distant future.

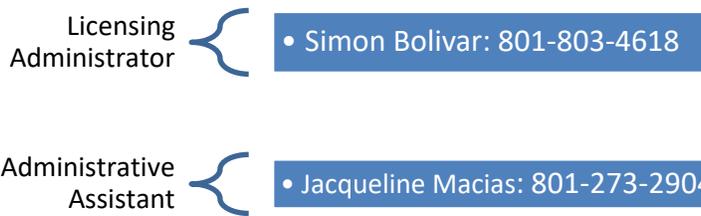
Other natural and man-made catastrophic events can also easily happen. Preparation for such events is paramount to the health and safety of all community members. In cooperation with the Utah's Emergency and Disaster Services and the Office of Child Care, Child Care Licensing has the infrastructure to locate and offer assistance to child care providers who may need guidance and support if such an event occurs.

When a major disaster happens, child care providers are required to follow their Health and Safety Plan. Child Care Licensing will grant providers an automatic temporary variance from compliance to most licensing rules. The length of the variance will be determined as soon as staff has an opportunity to physically evaluate the conditions of the child care facility and the provider has an opportunity to present a plan for the restoration and continuity of services. The initial condition of this variance will be that the basic food, water, shelter and adult supervision needs are met.

The **first step** is to account for the safety and whereabouts of Child Care Licensing staff. As soon as they can, each employee will sequentially report their condition to the following individuals.



Either the direct supervisor, out of area contact, or additional contact will then report to the following individuals sequentially. The report will include each staff member's name, their whereabouts, and their availability to assist providers in their area.



\*Once the overall well-being of the program staff has been established, hierarchy of command may be arranged according to the damage to the area and the availability of staff.

The **second step** is to account for each child care provider and the overall well-being of the children in care. Allowing emergency response groups to do their job first, each licenser will contact and, when needed, physically visit each provider on their caseload to assess general needs of the provider and the children in care. When a licenser is unavailable, other staff will contact and, when needed, visit the providers.

This assessment will include but will not be limited to:

1. Are all child care staff and children accounted for?
2. Do any other emergency response agencies need to be contacted?
3. Has there been communication between parents and the provider?
4. Has the care moved to an emergency relocation site?
5. Is the provider able to continue with care and provide at least food, shelter, water and adult supervision?

**Step three** is to compile a report of the specific needs of each provider. Needs may be categorized into three areas:

1. the physical welfare of the children, including adult supervision, and the staff.
2. resources such as food and water.
3. assistance with reuniting children with parents.

Staff members may then be assigned to assist providers based on their location and available resources.

An online copy of this plan, including contact information for all Child Care Licensing staff, emergency services, and child care providers is available to on Child Care Licensing's database. In the event of losing internet access, a hard copy of this plan and all required forms and information for continuity of services are also available at each one of the Child Care Licensing offices.

Child Care Licensing, the Care About Childcare Agencies, and the Office of Child Care will work together to implement the state's emergency plan and to contact any other agencies as needed.

### **Emergency Preparedness Regulatory Requirements for Child Care Providers**

Licensing rules require providers to have an approved Health and Safety Plan that includes emergency preparedness and evacuation procedures. Health and Safety plans must be individualized for each provider, reviewed annually with staff and parents, and updated as needed.

Health and Safety plans must include procedures for situations such as serious injuries, serious illnesses, poison exposure, outbreaks of communicable diseases, weather-related disasters, fires, man-made disasters, human threats, utility disruption, and other natural or man-made disasters that could create structural damage to the facility or pose health hazards.

Providers are also required to conduct drills at various times throughout the hours of operation, so that each child and staff member has an opportunity to participate. Center providers are to conduct and document monthly fire drills and twice a year disaster drills. Home providers are to conduct and document quarterly fire drills and yearly disaster drills.

Emergency plans should include:

- procedures for addressing each child's needs, with additional considerations for children younger than 2 year old and children with disabilities or chronic medical conditions.
- ways to account for each child's location during an emergency.
- shelter-in-place procedures for short and extended stay situations that require children to stay in the building.
- lock-down procedures for situations threatening the safety of children and personnel.
- evacuation procedures for situations that require children to leave the building that include posted evacuation routes, pre-determined meeting locations, pre-determined transportation plans, and procedures for reuniting parents and children.
- having working phones at the facility, in each vehicle when transporting children, and during off-site activities.
- posting emergency phone numbers and the facility address.
- keeping records of emergency contact information, medical conditions, and current medications for all children in attendance.

Providers are also to be in compliance with the local fire department guidelines and to provide to licensing a copy of their current fire certification once a year.

Hopefully these steps will provide a safe environment for the continuity of care until normal operations resume.