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A Guide to Support States and Territories' Use of Child Care Licensing Data



NATIONAL CENTER ON
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Introduction

States and Territories collect different types of data, including, for example, data captured by child care licensing and subsidy agencies and by quality rating and improvement systems. This guide focuses on one of these: administrative data related to child care licensing. *Administrative data* is information about individual children, families, service providers, and facilities that is collected and maintained as part of regular program operations.

Licensing data covers an array of topics, including

- ◆ basic information about the licensed facility (e.g., name of director or owner, capacity),
- ◆ children served (e.g., age ranges, whether the program accepts children receiving child care subsidies),
- ◆ compliance with state licensing standards (e.g., violations of health and safety requirements, plans of correction), and
- ◆ enforcement actions (e.g., fines, closure).

The breadth and depth of licensing data vary from State to State. States vary not only in the types of licensing data they collect, but also in how they define particular data elements and collect data. States also vary in their ability to post licensing data on a public website that is searchable to consumers. The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014¹ and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) final rule² include several provisions that influence the licensing data States and Territories collect, and also how they publicly share the data. These include the following:

- ◆ Full monitoring and inspection reports must be posted on a consumer-friendly and easily accessible website in a timely manner
- ◆ The aggregate number of deaths and serious injuries (for each provider category and licensing status) and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in child care settings each year must be posted on a consumer-friendly and easily accessible website

This guide will help CCDF/licensing Administrators³ assess current licensing data systems and identify needed changes. It explores new uses for licensing data, examines some strategies for dealing with common challenges, and provides additional resources for review and reference. In addition, Appendix A of the guide highlights three States—Iowa, North Carolina, and Texas—describing their current licensing data systems, uses of their data, and recent and planned changes to their licensing data systems in response to the 2014 reauthorization and 2016 final rule. Appendix B of the guide includes tables to help identify gaps between data elements that are currently collected and data that are required to be collected. The tables also include suggestions for possible new data elements.

Uses of Licensing Data

This section outlines several key ways CCDF Administrators, licensing administrators, and their partners can use licensing data:

- ◆ To meet federal or state requirements

¹ 42 U.S.C. §§ 9857–9858 (2015).

² Child Care and Development Fund, 45 C.F.R. § 98 (2016).

³ We recognize that the CCDF administrator is not always the individual who oversees the licensing system. Thus, we use the term “CCDF/licensing Administrators” to refer to CCDF Administrators and licensing administrators.

- ◆ To evaluate and refine procedures and practices
- ◆ To coordinate with other agencies or programs
- ◆ To support agency efforts for continuous quality improvement
- ◆ To help address questions of interest about the larger early care and education system

Meeting Reporting Requirements

- ◆ CCDF/licensing Administrators use licensing data to ensure that they are meeting legislative and regulatory requirements and to report to federal funders. Under reauthorization, new licensing data elements have been added to some of these reports. Federal reports, such as the Quality Progress Report (formerly named the Quality Performance Report) and the Child Care and Development Fund Annual Monthly Report (ACF-801), rely on licensing data. Examples of such data include number of children served by each type of licensed facility and number of providers in each type of facility receiving CCDF funding. Data across States can be analyzed to provide an overall national snapshot of child care at one point in time and, when compared over time, can help identify trends.
- ◆ State agencies or legislatures may also request reports about child care licensing to ensure that resources are spent as intended, help leaders plan budget requests, understand the availability of care in various regions or for different types of children and families, and confirm that agency goals are met.

Evaluating Practices

- ◆ CCDF Administrators and licensing administrators can use licensing data to evaluate their policies, procedures, and practices—and refine them, if needed.
 - Administrators could review data about dates of licensing visits to ensure that visits are happening at the required frequency.
 - Administrators could examine licensing data to better understand whether licensing staff caseloads should be adjusted. Licensing consultants who have to drive further to visit facilities in their caseloads may need to be assigned fewer facilities than staff assigned to closer facilities (see question 1).
 - If technical assistance (TA) is coded as a possible action step from a licensing visit, the licensing administrator could examine the frequency of technical assistance compared to other actions such as fines and warning letters to better understand how TA is being used.
 - CCDF/licensing administrators can reexamine the goals of their differential monitoring systems and use licensing data to gauge whether their goals have been achieved or are progressing. For example, administrators may assess whether visit time has decreased or whether providers with low compliance are receiving increased TA. They might also examine whether rates of injuries or compliance are different in programs that received comprehensive monitoring vs. differential monitoring.
 - Administrators could examine specific violations noted in the past year for each licensing consultant to identify inconsistencies among staff in interpreting guidance about particular violations. Administrators could then revise the interpretive guidance or provide additional staff training to help reduce inconsistencies. Administrators could also examine patterns of specific violations across individual licensing consultants for various kinds of programs. For instance, administrators could link licensing data with subsidy data to examine patterns for programs serving a high proportion of children receiving subsidies vs those serving a low proportion. As another example, they could identify communities (e.g., census tracts) serving a high percentage of minority families and compare licensing violations in programs in those communities with violations in programs in communities serving primarily White

families. This information could help inform efforts to support quality in licensed programs serving low-income or minority children.

- If monitoring for licensing is coordinated⁴ with another type of monitoring (for example, the same staff monitor programs for licensing and the quality rating and improvement system), administrators could examine licensing data to better understand how the coordinated efforts are working. For instance, administrators might ask whether the total annual visit time to programs has decreased. Administrators could also examine whether monitoring staff provide more TA than when monitoring was handled separately?

Coordinating with Other Programs or Agencies

- ◆ CCDF Administrators may use licensing data to coordinate with other programs or agencies.
 - Administrators may share some licensing data (e.g., information about compliance history) with quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) administrators to ensure that providers who participate in the QRIS are compliant with child care licensing regulations or meet QRIS requirements related to licensing. In Georgia, for example, agency staff in the QRIS, subsidy, pre-kindergarten, and nutrition programs can view the other program's data, which helps them coordinate with each other and address issues with particular programs.
 - Data about licensing revocations or enforcement actions might be shared with staff from the Child and Adult Care Food Program, state child care subsidy program, Head Start, or state-funded prekindergarten program to ensure that participating programs remain eligible or receive technical assistance.
 - Licensing administrators may provide data to child care health consultants or other TA providers to document the incidence and type of serious injuries in child care over time (e.g., in the past 5 years). This type of trend analysis could help identify topics for health consultants and TA providers to address to support best practices in child care (see question 2).
 - Licensing agencies can coordinate data with the child care subsidy program to better understand where children receiving subsidy go when a center or family child care home closes. For example, do children receiving care in a home transfer to a center if the home closes? Do they stop receiving subsidy?
 - Licensing agencies may share data with state prekindergarten programs to determine whether licensed programs receiving state pre-k funds are able to resolve licensing violations more quickly than those that do not receive state pre-k funds. Data about the types of violations commonly seen in licensed programs receiving state pre-k funds may also inform the type of technical assistance the pre-k program provides.

Supporting Continuous Quality Improvement

- ◆ CCDF Administrators and licensing administrators can use licensing data to help determine whether they are meeting agency goals and continuing to improve their services.
 - Administrators could use licensing data to identify the most frequent licensing violations for each type of program in the past 2 years, and then provide training to child care providers related to those areas of violation.

⁴ To learn more about coordinated monitoring, see Maxwell, K. L., Sosinsky, L., Tout, K., & Hegseth, D. (2016). *Coordinated monitoring systems for early care and education*. *OPRE Research Brief #2016-19*. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The paper can be downloaded at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/monitoring-in-early-care-and-education>

- Licensing data can be used to better understand patterns of noncompliance among geographic communities. For example, are the number and types of violations similar in urban and rural communities, or among communities with high and low proportions of low-income families? Are programs in low-income communities visited more or less often than those in higher-income communities? If TA is coded as an enforcement action, is TA used as often in programs in low-income communities as it is in higher-income communities?
- If the licensing data includes information about or is linked with professional development data from another system (e.g., training registry), then administrators might also be able to examine the relationship between particularly types of health and safety staff training and facility compliance with the relevant health and safety requirements.

Addressing Questions about the Early Care and Education System

- ◆ Licensing data may be used to help answer larger questions of interest about the early care and education system.
 - Linking licensing data with QRIS data could, for example, allow state leaders to examine the number and type of licensing violations for programs at each quality rating level. They may also examine the time needed to correct a licensing violation, to test the assumption that higher-rated programs may be able to correct violations more quickly than lower-rated programs (see question 3).
 - Administrators may explore the incidence of safe sleep violations by program type and staff characteristics to better target professional development resources. For example, if the incidence of safe sleep violations is greater in family child care homes, leaders might develop training specifically aimed at family child care providers (e.g., offered online to increase accessibility). If the State collects data about the early care and education workforce and links these individuals to the facilities where they work, CCDF Administrators may be able to examine the staffing characteristics of facilities that routinely are in compliance (e.g., participation in a specific training). These data could be used to, for instance, examine whether programs whose staff receive recent training on safe sleep practices are less likely to have a violation than programs with fewer staff with such training (see question 4).
 - CCDF/licensing administrators could also share aggregate information about licensing data with licensed providers to support providers' understanding of licensing issues in the broader system, to engage providers in considering improvements in the licensing system, and to work together to identify quality improvement supports. It might be useful, for example, to share information about types of licensing violations that are most common statewide and by region of the state. This could foster to a discussion about challenges in meeting those health and safety standards and possible strategies for supporting programs in meeting them. Annual forums to share and discuss licensing data could also help Administrators and their staff better understand the limitations in and possible new uses of licensing data.
 - Licensing data could be linked with subsidy and quality data to help state early childhood leaders better understand access⁵ to high-quality early care and education, identify disparities in access, and inform the development of strategies to support access. If primary language of staff is included in licensing data and in the subsidy data system, then it might also be possible to understand access to programs with staff who speak the same language as the children or families they serve.

⁵ For additional information about access, please see Friese, S., Lin, V., Forry, N. & Tout, K. (2017). *Defining and Measuring Access to High Quality Early Care and Education: A Guidebook for Policymakers and Researchers*. OPRE Report #2017-08. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The report can be downloaded at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/defining-and-measuring-access-to-high-quality-early-care-and-education-ecce-a-guidebook-for-policymakers-and-researchers>

Sample Data Questions and Data Elements

This section looks closely at a few specific ways licensing data can be used for these purposes. They provide sample questions that may help licensing administrators better understand program operations and implement improvements, along with the data elements (the individual fields or variables of data) that could be used to find answers. They also outline simple analytic steps that could be used to answer each question, and offer suggestions for how to use the results of the analysis.

Question 1: What is the average licensor travel time and caseload in each region of the State and for each licensor?

Data Elements: Program street address, program city, program zip code, licensing consultant, licensing consultant home or office location, program ID, type of inspection

CCDF reauthorization requires States to ensure that the ratio of licensing inspectors to providers is sufficient for timely inspection. Administrators may want to conduct a workload analysis to help determine an appropriate caseload for licensors. This analysis takes into consideration multiple factors that influence the number of inspections an individual can complete each year. These factors include, for example, the types of inspections, provider type and size (e.g., larger centers will take longer to inspect than smaller centers), and travel time from the licensor's office to the facilities. Administrators may want to calculate the average travel time for each region of the State and then compare the regional average with the travel time for each licensor in the region to better understand where adjustments in caseloads may be needed.

One way to determine travel time is to calculate the distance from the nearest home office to each licensed facility's address, using the following data elements: *program street address*, *program city*, and *program zip code*. For each licensing consultant, first calculate the average distance to their assigned facilities (using *program ID*) based on the distance between the home office and each facility. Second, calculate an average distance to all facilities in the region from the home office. This distance is the typical travel time that can be expected of licensing consultants. Licensing consultants with higher-than-average travel time for their region might need to have lower caseloads than those with lower-than-average travel time. Similarly, it may be useful to compare average travel times across all regions of the State to help determine the number of licensing staff needed to adequately serve child care facilities in each region. Distance is one, but not the only, factor in estimating travel time. The amount of traffic, for example, also influences travel time. We included distance in this example because it provides approximate travel time information and relies primarily on data that are already in the licensing data system. Administrators may want to try other measures of travel time, though, to determine which approach works best for their state or territory.

Question 2: What is the incidence of serious injuries in child care over the past 5 years?

Data Element: Serious injuries and fatalities, program type, enrollment, years of operation, compliance history, quality rating

CCDF reauthorization and the final rule require that States make the annual number of serious injuries and deaths that occur in child care programs eligible to receive CCDF available on a consumer-friendly and easily accessible website. Providing this aggregate number will require States to track the number of serious injuries over a 12-month period and report the total. It will be important for States to have separate data elements for serious injuries and fatalities, as both will need to be reported separately.

States may want to complete other analyses related to serious injuries, particularly analyses that consider program characteristics to better understand what factors might contribute to high levels of injuries. These characteristics could include location, program type, total enrollment, years in operation, compliance history, and

quality rating. Completing these analyses the first time will provide States with a baseline of the types of programs that most often have serious injury violations. Other data elements about injuries and fatalities might include, for example, whether the injury required hospitalization, whether the injury or fatality was related to an existing medical condition, and the number of children and staff present at the time of the incident. Technical assistance could be provided to these programs as a preventive measure to reduce the number of serious injuries. Tracking serious injuries over time, by each of the program characteristics, will provide States with ongoing assessments of the success of such targeted TA efforts.

Question 3: What are the numbers and types of licensing violations for programs at each quality level?

Data Elements: Health and safety violations, program type, QRIS rating (from the QRIS data system)

States are often interested in understanding how the quality of the health and safety features of child care programs is connected to other features of quality. Administrators may expect that programs at higher levels of quality may have fewer licensing violations than programs at lower levels of quality.

Confirming this assumption typically entails using data from both licensing and QRIS datasets, although in some States these datasets are one or are directly linked. In States where there is not a direct linkage, a staff member will need to create a dataset that includes the important data elements from both. This could include data elements such as the number of health and safety violations for programs, the QRIS rating, and other characteristics, such as program type, to check for variation among different types of programs. The analysis itself involves pulling simple descriptive statistics of violations by rating, for each program type. This analysis could be repeated to understand the incidence of serious injuries and fatalities by these factors. If there are data elements that note the time needed to correct a violation, administrators may also examine the extent to which higher-quality programs correct violations faster than lower-quality programs with similar violations.

The results of these analyses should provide basic information to either confirm or reject the assumption that violations decrease at higher levels of quality or that the time needed to resolve a violation decreases as quality increases. The results could prompt further analyses and discussion regarding the relationship between program quality and licensing violations. Additional questions might examine the type, frequency, and severity of violations that occur in programs of different quality levels. It may also be useful to examine patterns over time.

Question 4: What is the incidence of safe sleep violations for each program type?

Data Elements: Health and safety violations, program type

States may consider categorizing types of violations within the broader *health and safety violations* data element. Categorizing these violations can help States understand and track the incidence of certain types of violations over time. Categories should reflect the types of violations that need to be reported in aggregate, and should also align with technical assistance strategies so there is a clear pathway to address violations.

Categories used to subdivide health and safety violations will depend on the specific regulations in each State. One common category that States may want to track is the incidence of safe sleep violations. Administrators may be interested in understanding which types of programs have the highest levels of this type of violation. Accessing this information will allow States to assess the barriers that might make it more difficult for some types of programs to understand and adhere to safe sleep practices. This information can also be used to target technical assistance on this topic, and to track whether TA leads to long-term improvement in adherence to safe sleep practices.

Considerations for Using Licensing Data

Staff managing licensing data systems face challenges in collecting, using, and sharing their data. This section describes some of the challenges faced by States and provides suggestions for how best practices from the field of data management⁶ can be applied to address these challenges.

Common Challenges to Managing Licensing Data

Licensing data systems tend to be older and somewhat outdated databases that were often the first electronic systems used to house data in the licensing agency. Older or outdated data systems are sometimes referred to as “legacy” data systems. Although many of these systems have been updated since they were first created, they may still rely on older architecture that restricts their functionality as compared to newer systems. The older systems cannot be adapted easily to respond to new requirements or priorities. There are three major challenges to legacy data systems:

- ◆ **Adding or modifying fields:** It is often hard to change existing fields or add new fields in a legacy data system. There are often dependencies within the system that would be broken if a field were changed or dropped. It is sometimes easier to add new fields, but it can be difficult to incorporate those fields into existing queries or reports.
- ◆ **Generating new reports:** Licensing staff often generate standard reports on a regular basis to address specific areas of interest, like serious injuries by region of the State or number of monitoring visits each month by program type. These reports are preset queries that pull data elements across different areas of a relational database and present the data in a standard format. It may be difficult or impossible to generate a new report with a legacy data system because the data system may no longer be supported by the software developer. Thus, licensing administrators with legacy data systems may not be able to create reports to address new questions of interest.
- ◆ **Linking to other data systems:** Legacy data systems often do not have the functionality to link to newer data systems. Data linking can help promote efficiency by reducing manual data management. Licensing administrators who want to link their data with another data system—for example, to a subsidy or QRIS data system—often find that their licensing system cannot be linked to these other data systems. It is also possible that the licensing data system can be linked but the other data system’s limitations prohibit linking.

The underlying architecture used to support legacy data systems should ideally be updated on a regular basis so it is in line with modern database software that allows for flexibility in adding fields, creating reports, and linking to other databases. However, licensing programs often must compete for technology resources with other programs within their agencies and other agencies, which may lengthen the amount of time between major upgrades. Some States have found that resources can be accessed when a change to the law requires programmatic or data changes. When licensing laws change, administrators can use it to advocate for major database upgrades even when resources are scarce.

⁶ The paper *Enterprise Information Management: Best Practices in Data Governance* (Helen Sun, Oracle Corporation, 2011) provides a useful overview of industry standards around database management and data quality, including descriptions of data governance’s important role in determining data policy. This paper can be downloaded at <http://egovstandards.gov.in/sites/default/files/oea-best-practices-data-gov-400760.pdf>.

Using Data Best Practices to Address Challenges

The field of data management provides some guidance for addressing these challenges. Adhering to these best practices does not solve these problems, but rather helps manage the limitations of existing data systems and support successful program implementation.

- ◆ **Establishing a data governance structure:** A data governance entity develops and reviews policies and guidelines about data collection and management and ensures the privacy and confidentiality of data. Data governance is important because it can ensure that the data needed to meet multiple requirements are being collected. It can also help ensure that the program has the technology resources necessary to produce high-quality data. A data governing body can review, suggest, and plan for long-term improvements to infrastructure to avoid some of the challenges inherent to legacy data systems. If there is not data governance structure for the agency, then it may be useful to ask a staff member to review the policies and guidelines regarding licensing data and consider whether additional guidelines are needed.
- ◆ **Supporting consistent documentation of data:** Appropriate data documentation—through the use of codebooks, dictionaries, or manuals—helps licensing program staff understand what data needs to be entered, why that data are important, and how it should be used. Without adequate documentation, staff use their own judgement about the level and type of information they need to collect and enter into the data system, which means that there will be variation in what and how data are collected across staff. Good documentation helps ensure that data are high quality and can be used with greater confidence.
- ◆ **Promoting data linking to improve efficiency:** Most States use data systems that align with programmatic responsibilities and goals. Licensing data systems primarily house regulation data, while other, related programs (such as QRIS, subsidy, and child welfare) have their own data systems.

CCDF regulations require that CCDF administrators report on data that might be housed in other data systems (e.g., subsidy, quality rating, child abuse) besides the licensing system. The most effective way to access and report on the data is to have a direct link between systems that allows for merging of information based on shared unique identifiers, like program ID. Merging reduces the amount of manual data entry that needs to be done and may make it easier to address questions about the larger early care and education system.

Linking data systems is technically complex and many States find that they do not have the adequate resources to undertake large linking efforts. There are other, less complex, options for States in this situation. One option is to work with a data analyst who can create a dataset that combines a select number of important fields that licensing administrators want to analyze. For example, a data analyst might pull the QRIS ratings on a sample of programs and then pull a few key compliance variables from the last 3 years for those programs from the licensing data set, which would allow staff to examine the compliance history of programs at different quality rating levels. A dataset like this usually captures a point in time, so the effort would need to be repeated when new analyses need to be completed.

Resources

- ◆ Guidance and resources about ChildCare.gov, the national website designed to help parents search for child care are provided at <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/centers/childcaregov-project>.
- ◆ The licensing data a State collects depends in part on its licensing regulations. The **National Database on Child Care Licensing Regulations** provides state-by-state information on licensing regulations: <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/licensing>.
- ◆ Three reports by the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (2015) describe licensing regulations and policies for child care centers, family child care homes, and group child care homes:

- *Research Brief #1: Trends in Child Care Center Licensing Regulations and Policies for 2014*
<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/research-brief-1-trends-child-care-center-licensing-regulations-and-policies-2014>
 - *Research Brief #2: Trends in Family Child Care Homes Licensing Regulations and Policies for 2014*
<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/research-brief-2-trends-family-child-care-home-licensing-regulations-and-policies-2014>
 - *Research Brief #3: Trends in Group Child Care Home Licensing Regulations and Policies for 2014*
<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/research-brief-3-trends-group-child-care-home-licensing-regulations-and-policies-2014>
- ◆ These resources on data governance and management might be helpful in establishing a data governance group and identifying topics to address in the group:
- *Data Governance Checklist* (revised 2015), by the Privacy Technical Assistance Center
https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/Data%20Governance%20Checklist.pdf
 - *Data Governance and Stewardship* (revised 2015), by the Privacy Technical Assistance Center
https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/Data_Governance_and_Stewardship.pdf
 - *Best Practices in Data Governance and Management for Early Care and Education: Supporting Effective Quality Rating and Improvement Systems* (2014), by Roberta Weber and Iheoma U. Iruka
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/best-practices-in-data-governance-and-management-for-early-care-and-education-supporting-effective-quality-rating-and>

Appendix A. Licensing Data Systems: State Examples

The table below describes licensing data systems in three States: Iowa, North Carolina, and Texas. Each state example includes descriptions of the data system, uses and users of the data, system strengths and limitations, recent improvements, and plans for future improvements. This table is intended to provide a broad overview of each system and illustrate how these States are addressing CCDF requirements while working with some of the common limitations of licensing data systems presented earlier in this guide.

	Iowa	North Carolina	Texas
Description of the licensing data system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Known as the Child Care Regulatory Information System (CCRIS); began using in fall 2016 ◆ Developed by in-house staff as a replacement for the off-the-shelf software used previously ◆ Managed by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) ◆ CCRIS houses data about monitoring visits, violations, technical assistance, and serious injuries and deaths ◆ Separate system called Kindertrack houses information about child care subsidy administration and receipt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Built by the State’s Information Technology Division (ITD) in the late 1990s ◆ Web-based system ◆ Housed within the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); operated by the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) ◆ Includes information about licensed child care facilities, regulation infractions, and child maltreatment violations; also includes information about legal unregulated facilities ◆ One portal provides information accessible to DHHS regulatory staff who do licensing visits ◆ A second portal is for the public, who can access a subset of information through DCDEE’s website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Created in 2001 by an external vendor ◆ Maintained by the Division of Child Care Licensing (CCL) ◆ Owned by CCL’s parent agency, the Health and Human Services Commission. ◆ Houses a variety of data related to licensing: permit dates; permit restrictions; applications; inspections, including violations of minimum standards and laws; technical assistance; background checks; abuse and neglect investigations and other investigations; administrative penalties; corrective and adverse actions; exemption requests; and waivers and variances

	Iowa	North Carolina	Texas
Data uses and types of users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ DHS staff use CCRIS to enter and track monitoring progress and answer questions, such as the following: How many complaints result in a regulatory violation? What types of noncompliance are we seeing the most of? What regions of the State are having problems with safe sleep practices and need technical assistance? ◆ Child care resource and referral agency staff use the system to enter information that is used for Iowa’s child care hotline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The public uses the data search for child care and review violations ◆ Agency staff use the data to meet reporting requirements and to examine information about programs’ interactions with DCDEE over time ◆ Program administrators use the data to create monthly statistical reports with aggregate data by: county, type of licensed facility, capacity, approval to participate in subsidy, and enrollment data ◆ Partner agencies, such as Smart Start and child care resource and referral agencies, use the monthly statistical reports to monitor child care participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Members of the public access the data through a searchable website that allows them to view basic information about programs and their licensing status ◆ CCL staff use the system to enter and manage the data they collect about the programs they visit for monitoring purposes ◆ CCL administrators use the data system to understand the work of CCL, manage performance, meet reporting requirements of state and federal entities, track progress on performance measures, and perform quality assurance of program implementation ◆ Other state departments use the information to understand links between agencies ◆ Legislature uses the data for policy decision making

	Iowa	North Carolina	Texas
Strengths of the current system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Built using an iterative process where components were built, field tested, and improved based on findings ◆ DHS administrators note that field staff have rated the system highly, reporting that it is intuitive and promotes efficiency of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Licensing data system is a one-stop shop for licensing data ◆ Historical licensing data is available (going back to the late 1990s) ◆ Allows the public to view basic information about programs (e.g., licensing violations) ◆ Supports the day-to-day work of licensing staff and helps administrators monitor the work of staff and identify areas of strength and improvement ◆ QRIS ratings are linked directly to the subsidy data system to facilitate tiered reimbursement payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provides detailed information to parents and the public through its robust website ◆ Allows parents and the public to access information about inspection visits and violations, as well as other program information such as location ◆ Providers have access to a portal that allows them to update some information available in the public portal, such as contact information and background checks ◆ Background check allows CCL staff and administrators to access up-to-date information about the status of arrests and convictions

	Iowa	North Carolina	Texas
Limitations of the current system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Challenging to link to other data systems that are built on older architecture, like the Kindertrack system ◆ Limited resources for making technology improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Data system doesn't currently include all data elements of interest (e.g., available slots by age for each facility) ◆ Updating or enhancing the data system has historically been challenging to do in a timely and cost-effective manner ◆ Updates to the system that are required by law are prioritized by ITD, but other improvements that are less urgent are implemented over long time frames 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ CCL's data system is more than 15 years old and uses outdated technology ◆ The age of the system limits CCL staff's ability to modify specific reports ◆ A lack of resources limits the ways that data from CCL can be linked to data housed in other systems (e.g., to the subsidy database) ◆ Data about abuse and neglect investigations are entered into two data systems: the licensing system and the child welfare system ◆ CCL faces limitations when other state agencies make changes to systems that interface with the licensing system
Recent system improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Created CCRIS primarily in response to CCDF reauthorization because it would have been difficult to access the required information through the old system ◆ Add serious injury data ◆ Add additional data fields to align with ChildCare.gov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Updating the public portal to post annual compliance visit data ◆ Updating the licensing system to prepare to connect to the NC FAST (North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology) system that houses data from several programs, like food assistance, welfare cash assistance, and child care subsidy ◆ Added data fields about maltreatment investigations in response to a 2016 North Carolina law that required DCDEE to make child maltreatment determinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Developed a search so CCL staff can use name or Social Security number to find providers and see which programs they are associated with in the CCL database ◆ Creating a batch process with the subsidy data system that would allow the licensing system to get automatic updates about the start and end dates of subsidy receipt ◆ Developing a process for renewal of licensing permits based on a 2015 legislative directive

	Iowa	North Carolina	Texas
Plans for future improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In the long term, use CCRIS data as a supervisory tool to help licensing staff support compliance. Also want to use data to examine consistency among licensing staff ◆ Develop additional reports to help legislators make funding decision ◆ Make reports related to visits by visit type and service area available to a broader range of DHS staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Determine additional fields needed to meet CCDF requirements ◆ Link licensing data with workforce data ◆ Eventually add new fields (e.g., available slots by age) ◆ Move toward electronic data entry, rather than paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Change the system that notifies staff of inspection due dates, in response to changes in recent federal legislation ◆ Update website to include the total number of substantiated serious injuries for licensed facilities ◆ Develop an invoice system to allow providers to pay fees online ◆ Eventually create a dashboard to give inspectors real-time information to help them manage their workloads and help supervisors manage caseloads ◆ Use licensing data over time to understand how past violations may predict future violations

Appendix B. Licensing Data Elements

Table B1 lists the data elements pertinent to the licensing agency that are required to be collected in the CCDF regulation. Data requirements include both individual data elements and aggregation of individual data elements into reports or summary statistics. Table B2 includes optional data elements that are recommended by ChildCare.gov or may help States improve their data collection and use. Across both tables, the data elements are organized into seven categories: program characteristics, child and family characteristics, teacher and provider characteristics, monitoring, violations and enforcements, consumer education and information, and financing and funding. The second column in each table provides space for licensing staff to indicate whether they currently collect this data element. These tables can help CCDF Administrators and licensing administrators identify the gaps between the data they currently collect and the data they are required to collect or might benefit from collecting.

Table B1a. Data Elements Included in CCDF Regulations – Likely in Licensing Data System

Data Elements	Collected in State System?	Description	Category	CCDF Regulation Citation	Shared In
Program state ID		Unique identifier given to a child care program by the state regulatory agency or partner agency.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(14)	ACF-801 (2, 32)
Program FEIN		The program's Federal Employer Identification Number.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(14)	ACF-801 (31)
Program type		Indicator of the type of facility in which the child care program is located. Identifies whether a child care program is in a commercial setting or a home setting.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(8)	ACF-801 (26) and ACF-800
Zip code for program		Zip code in which the facility is located.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(2)	ACF-801 (39)

Data Elements	Collected in State System?	Description	Category	CCDF Regulation Citation	Shared In
Localized list of child care providers		A localized list of all licensed child care providers, and, at the discretion of the Lead Agency, all eligible child care providers (other than an individual who is related to all children for whom child care is provided), differentiating between licensed and license-exempt providers, searchable by zip code.	Program characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(2)	Website
Inspection Date		Date of the child care provider's most recent health, safety and fire inspection meeting the requirements of §98.42(b)(2)	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)(i) and 98.71(a)(20)	Website and ACF-801 (40)
Results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints		Results of monitoring and inspection reports for all eligible and licensed child care providers (other than relative), including those due to major substantiated complaints about failure to comply with provisions.	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)	Website
Full monitoring and inspection reports		Full monitoring and inspection reports, either in plain language or with a plain language summary.	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)	Website
Process for correcting inaccuracies in inspection reports		Lead Agencies must establish a process for correcting inaccuracies in licensing inspection reports.	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)	Website
Parent complaints and substantiations		Maintain a record of substantiated parent complaints. A record of substantiated complaints is maintained and is made available.	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.32(d)(2) and 98.32(b)	
History of compliance (a minimum of 3 years of results is required)		Program's history of compliance over at least the last 3 years.	Monitoring	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)(iv)	Website

Data Elements	Collected in State System?	Description	Category	CCDF Regulation Citation	Shared In
Corrective action taken by the State and child care program		Corrective action by the State and child care provider, in response to the violation.	Violations and Enforcement	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)(ii)	Website
Health and safety violations, including fatalities and serious injuries		Any health and safety violations, including any fatalities and serious injuries occurring at the provider, prominently displayed on the report or summary.	Violations and Enforcement	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(4)(iii)	Website
Annual aggregate number of child fatalities		Annual aggregate number of child fatalities that were the result of an injury that occurred in a child care facility that was eligible to receive CCDF subsidy payments, for each provider category and licensing status.	Violations and Enforcement	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(5) and 98.71(b)(5)	Website and ACF-800 (2a)
Annual aggregate number of serious injuries		Annual aggregate number of serious injuries in the State for each provider category and licensing status.	Violations and Enforcement	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(5)	Website
Annual aggregate number of instances of substantiated child abuse		Annual aggregate number of instances of substantiated child abuse.	Violations and Enforcement	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)(5)	Website
Provision of consumer education and information		States will collect and disseminate consumer education information to parents of eligible children, the general public, and providers through a consumer-friendly and easily accessible Web site that ensures the widest possible access to services for families who speak languages other than English and persons with disabilities.	Consumer education	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.33(a)	Website and ACF-800 (9a)

Table B1b. Data Elements Included in CCDF Regulations – May Be in Licensing Data System or Other Data System

Data Elements	Collected in State System?	Description	Category	CCDF Regulation Citation	Shared in
QRIS participation		Whether the program is participating in a Quality Rating and Improvement System.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21)	ACF-801 (33)
QRIS rating		The QRIS rating level of the provider.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21) and 98.33(a)(3)	Website and ACF-801(34)
Accreditation status		National accreditation that the program has achieved.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21)	ACF-801 (35)
Subject to pre-k standards		Whether the provider is subject to its state's pre-k standards.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21)	ACF-801(36)
Other State-defined quality measure		Whether the provider is subject to other State-defined quality measure.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21)	ACF-801 (37)
Subject to Head Start or Early Head Start standards		Whether the provider is subject to its state's Head Start or Early Head Start standards.	Program Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(21)	ACF-801 (38)
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity		Whether the child is of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (18)
American Indian or Alaskan Native		Whether the child's race is American Indian or Alaskan Native.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (19)
Asian		Whether the child's race is Asian.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (20)

Data Elements	Collected in State System?	Description	Category	CCDF Regulation Citation	Shared in
Black or African American		Whether the child’s race is Black or African American.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (21)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		Whether the child’s race is Native Hawaiian or an Other Pacific Islander.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (22)
White		Whether the child’s race is White.	Child Characteristics	CCDF, 45 C.F.R. § 98.71(a)(4)	ACF-801 (23)

Table B2. Optional Data Elements

Data Element	Collected in State System?	Description ⁷	Category
Child assessment used		Type of child assessment(s) the program uses.	Program Characteristics
Curriculum used		Type of curriculum the program uses.	Program Characteristics
Environmental features (e.g., no pets, fenced-in play area, handicap accessible)		Environmental features of the program, such no pets, fenced-in play area, handicap accessible, and separated play areas.	Program Characteristics
Meal options		Types of meals available to children.	Program Characteristics
Program county		County in which the facility is located.	Program Characteristics
Program email		Email address that a parent would use to contact the program.	Program Characteristics
Program website link		URL for the website created by the child care facility as provided by the regulatory agency or partner agency.	Program Characteristics
Special schedules		Specific schedules that the program can accommodate.	Program Characteristics
Transportation options		Types of transportation options available to children in care.	Program Characteristics
Tuition – infant – hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly		Highest tuition charged for infants before any discounts or subsidies are applied.	Program Characteristics
Tuition – preschool – hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly		Highest tuition charged for preschoolers before any discounts or subsidies are applied.	Program Characteristics
Tuition – school age – hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly		Highest tuition charged for school-age children before any discounts or subsidies are applied.	Program Characteristics
Tuition – toddler – hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly		Highest tuition charged for toddlers before any discounts or subsidies are applied.	Program Characteristics
Yearly schedule		The portion of the year during which the program provides care for children.	Program Characteristics

⁷ Some of the data element descriptions in this table are based on recommendations from ChildCare.gov.

Data Element	Collected in State System?	Description ⁷	Category
Program licensed capacity for infants, toddlers, preschool, and school age.		The total number of children for which the facility is legally allowed to provide care, based on the State's definition of each age group.	Program Characteristics
Program licensed capacity – total		The total number of children for which the facility is legally allowed to provide care, all ages.	Program Characteristics
Program social media links – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube		URL link to the program's existing Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube page, as provided by the regulatory agency or partner agency.	Program Characteristics
Languages spoken by staff		Languages spoken by the child care facility staff.	Teacher and Provider Characteristics
Training and experience to support special needs		Types of training and experience that program staff have regarding accommodating children with special needs.	Teacher and Provider Characteristics
Discounts available		Discounts available to parents (e.g., sibling discounts, employee discounts).	Finance and Funding
Additional deposits and fees		Deposits and fees that parents must pay in addition to tuition.	Finance and funding
Participation in state or federal programs		General category for the types of state and federal programs the child care program participates in (including child care subsidy programs).	Finance and Funding
Licensing complaint links		URL link to state licensing complaint reports on the child care program. One of three types of URL links can be submitted to ChildCare.gov: (1) direct link to program-specific report, (2) link to program profile that includes direct link to program-specific report, or (3) link to child care licensing search tool.	Violations and Enforcement
Licensing enforcement action links		URL link to state licensing enforcement action reports on the child care program. One of three types of URL links can be submitted to ChildCare.gov: (1) direct link to program-specific report, (2) link to program profile that includes direct link to program-specific report, or (3) link to child care licensing search tool.	Violations and Enforcement

Data Element	Collected in State System?	Description ⁷	Category
Licensing inspection report links		URL link to state licensing inspection reports on the child care program. One of three types of URL links can be submitted to ChildCare.gov: (1) direct link to program-specific report, (2) link to program profile that includes direct link to program-specific report, or (3) link to child care licensing search tool.	Monitoring
Years in operation		The number of years the program has been in operation.	Program Characteristics
Enrollment – Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school age		The number of children enrolled in the program, by age group.	Program Characteristics
Enrollment by classroom		The number of children enrolled in each classroom of the program.	Program Characteristics
Staffed capacity (ratios and group size per room)		The ratio of staff to children not be exceeded in each classroom in the program.	Program Characteristics
Variances or waivers from licensing standards		The type of variance or waiver for licensing standards granted to the program.	Program Characteristics
Technical assistance provided		A list of the technical assistance supports and activities provided to the program.	Program Characteristics
Practitioner qualifications		Practitioner education qualifications, including degree attainment and years of experience.	Teacher and Provider Characteristics
Training and certification information (date started, date completed, and expiration date)		The dates that practitioner trainings and certification started, were completed, and expire.	Teacher and Provider Characteristics
Number of completed and upcoming inspections		The number of completed and scheduled inspections in the calendar year.	Monitoring
Type of visit		The type or purpose of the licensing visit.	Monitoring
Time in and time out (i.e., the amount of time the licenser spent in the program)		The time the licenser entered and exited the program for the licensing visit.	Monitoring

Data Element	Collected in State System?	Description ⁷	Category
Automated notification of upcoming of visits to program, including the visit purpose		Whether the program received an automatic notification (i.e., email, call, letter) about the date and purpose of an upcoming licensing visit.	Monitoring
Background check documentation		Findings from the background checks of practitioners.	Monitoring
Licensing consultant		Name of licensing consultant.	Monitoring
Complaint review information		Description of the review of the complaint information.	Violations and Enforcement
Description of violation, in plain language		Description of the licensing violation incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Regulation number that violation applies to		The code or regulation that the licensing violation applies to.	Violations and Enforcement
Enforcement information – type of enforcement action		The type of enforcement action taken in response to the licensing violation incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Enforcement information – whether enforcement action was appealed		Whether the program appealed the enforcement action that resulted in response to the licensing violation incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Enforcement information – outcome of enforcement appeal or administrative hearing		The outcome of any appeal of the licensing violation finding.	Violations and Enforcement
Description of the circumstances of the injury or fatality		Description of the circumstances of the injury or fatality that resulted from the licensing violation, including how it occurred and where in the program it occurred.	Violations and Enforcement
Description of the type and cause of injury or fatality		Description of the type and cause of injury or fatality that resulted from the licensing violation, including the bodily location.	Violations and Enforcement
Injury or fatality related to a medical condition		Whether the injury or fatality was related to a medical condition of the child.	Violations and Enforcement
Agency to which the injury was reported		Name of the agency to which the injury or fatality was reported.	Violations and Enforcement

Data Element	Collected in State System?	Description ⁷	Category
Date and time of incident		Date and time of the licensing violation incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Whether the injury required emergency medical attention or hospitalization		Whether the licensing violation incident resulted in the medical treatment or hospitalization of the child.	Violations and Enforcement
Whether the parent sought medical attention for any injury sustained while in child care		Whether the parent sought medical treatment for the child as a result of injuries sustained in the licensing violation incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Names of reporter, child, parent or guardian, and witnesses		Names of the involved parties in the licensing violation that resulted in injury or fatality, including the name of the reporter, the child, the guardians, and any witnesses.	Violations and Enforcement
Number of staff and children present in child's immediate group		Number of staff and children present in a classroom during the incident.	Violations and Enforcement
Referrals or citations resulting from complaint		Citations given to the program in response to the complaint of the licensing violation.	Violations and Enforcement

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**National Center on
Early Childhood Quality Assurance**

9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

Phone: 877-296-2250

Email: QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info

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