



Region of Waterloo

Home Child Care Policies and Procedures

Section: Contracting with Home Child Care

Policy No: 4561736

Policy Title: Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Revision Date: January 30, 2026

Authority: Region of Waterloo

Policy Statement: This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of all children receiving care.

Policy Intent: This policy will provide caregivers, agency staff (e.g., Consultant, Program Assistant, Supervisors, etc.), students and volunteers with a clear direction as to what steps are to be taken when a private care child or Region referred child does not arrive at the home child care premises as expected, as well as procedures to follow to ensure the safe arrival and dismissal of all children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of all children in care.

Definitions:

Caregiver: The person in charge of the children in a premises where home child care is provided.

Emergency Contact / Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Home Child Care Consultant: An employee of the home child care agency who will provide support at and monitor each premises and will be responsible to the licensee.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the license issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the home child care agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Private Care Child(ren) A child where the Caregiver has a private contract with a parent to care for the child and collects parent fees directly from the parent. The parents do not contract directly with the Region nor is the child referred to the Caregiver by the Region.



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Program Assistant: An employee of the home child care agency who will provide support to the agency staff and Caregivers.

Region referred child(ren): A child directly referred to the Caregiver by the Region and where the Region pays the Caregiver directly for the home child care service. The Region contracts directly with the parent for a Region referred child.

Supervisor: An employee of the home child care agency who will provide support to agency staff and Caregivers including outside of regular business hours.

Procedures:

Accepting a child into care

The Caregiver is responsible for signing children into the daily log book as children arrive at the home premises where care is provided.

The Caregiver is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/guardians related to drop-off or absences is noted in the daily log book and the attendance record.

Where a child (region referred or private care child) has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the home child care premises and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off or that the child will be absent (e.g., left a voice message or advised the Caregiver at pick-up) the Caregiver must:
 - Attempt to contact the child's parent/guardian no later than 60 minutes after the child's anticipated arrival time. Caregivers shall contact the child's parent/guardian(s) by phone call, text message or email at least once to confirm absence. If a phone call is the method of contact and no response is received a Caregiver must leave a voicemail if able.
 - Caregiver must document contact attempt in the daily log book (including time, method, and outcome). The Caregiver must document the child's absence in their log book and the attendance record.
 - When contact is made with the parent/guardian the Caregiver will remind them of the requirement to notify the Caregiver if their child will be absent or sick on a regularly scheduled day of care.
2. If the child does not arrive at the home child care premise within 60 minutes of their anticipated arrival time on their next scheduled day and their previous days absence has not been confirmed, the Caregiver must:
 - Attempt to contact the child's parent/guardian(s) again by phone call, text message or email at least once to confirm absences. If a phone call is the method of contact and no response is received a caregiver must leave a voicemail if able.

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- If the Caregiver is still not successful in confirming a child's absence then they are to follow up with the emergency contacts listed on the child's Application and Consent Form. The emergency contacts can either support trying to reach the parent/guardian(s) and/or confirming the absence.
 - Caregiver must document contact attempt in the daily log book (including time, method, and outcome). The Caregiver must document the child's absence in their log book and the attendance record.
3. If the Caregiver is unable to confirm the child's absence by the third unexplained absent day, the Caregiver will continue to mark the child absent in their logbook and attendance record and notify their Consultant. The Consultant will notify their supervisor, and together they will determine if any further action is required.

Releasing a child from care

The Caregiver shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or emergency contact that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization in the Application & Consent form that the child may be released to.

Where the Caregiver does not know the individual picking up the child, the Caregiver must ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the Application & Consent form or written authorization provided by parent/guardian. If the parent has not provided written authorization and/ or the individual has not provided identification, the child is not to be released.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived within 15 minutes of their scheduled pick up time, the Caregiver shall ensure that the child is given a snack (as needed) and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. The Caregiver shall contact the parent/guardian to review that the child is still in care and inquire about their anticipated pick-up time.
3. Where the Caregiver is unable to reach the parent/guardian, the Caregiver is to contact the emergency contact(s) listed on the Application & Consent form that the parent/guardian(s) have provided written authorization for their child to be released to.
4. Where the Caregiver is unable to make contact with the parent/guardian(s) or an authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the Region referred child:
 1. The Caregiver shall contact their Consultant or covering staff.

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2. OR

If this occurs for a Region referred child(ren) outside of office hours (Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm) or for a private care child(ren) and the caregiver is either no longer available for care or within 1 hour of the agreed upon pick up time (whichever comes sooner) then the Caregiver shall proceed with contacting Family and Children's Services. Skip step 5 and see below.

5. Where the home child care agency staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the Region referred child's file (e.g., emergency contacts) by the time the Caregiver is no longer available for care or within 1 hour of the agreed upon pick up time (whichever comes sooner) the home child agency staff shall proceed with contacting the local Family and Children's Services.

Family and Children's Services

Kitchener/Waterloo: (519) 576-0540

Cambridge: 519-623-6970

The Caregiver or home child care agency staff shall follow Family and Children's Services direction with respect to next steps. For Region referred children the home child agency staff will contact the Caregiver to confirm next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Where a parent/guardian has provided written and signed authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, Caregiver must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the Caregiver shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian in the Outdoor Play and Supervision Form or written authorization and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The Caregiver shall document the time of departure from care in the daily log book.



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References / Appendix:

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Safe arrival and dismissal policy

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

(a) provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,

(i) to individuals indicated by a child's parent, or

(ii) in accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and

(b) sets out the steps that must be taken if,

(i) a child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home child care premises, or

(ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises.