



## **S.F. No. 2135 – Creating an Office of Early Care and Education Program Support and Accountability, allowing for interpretive guidance, directing the commissioner to standardize child care licensing (as proposed to be amended by the A-1 amendment)**

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**Section 1 (amends Minn. Stat. § 142B.16, subdivision 2; Reconsideration of correction orders)** allows an applicant or license holder licensed by the commissioner of children, youth, and families to, prior to requesting a reconsideration, ask the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to provide interpretive guidance on the applicable rule or statute underlying the correction order if the applicant or license holder believes the rule or statute is ambiguous or the commissioner's interpretation is in error. Requires providers to use the provider licensing and reporting hub to request the interpretive guidance. Modifies the timeline for requesting reconsideration to include receipt of the interpretive guidance.

**Section 2 (Office of Early Care and Education Program Support and Accountability)** establishes a new office within the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and requires the office to perform certain functions.

**Subdivision 1** establishes the Office of Early Care and Education Program Support and Accountability within the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

**Subdivision 2** defines “accreditation,” “office,” and “peer coach” for the purposes of this section.

**Subdivision 3** requires the office to develop child care licensing regulations that focus on basic physical health and safety in consultation with stakeholders and requires the office to submit proposed legislation that codifies the regulations by January 15, 2026.

**Subdivision 4** requires the office to create an early care and education program designation for child care providers and to submit proposed legislation that codifies the designation by January 15, 2026.

**Subdivision 5** requires the office to create a time-limited designation for child care programs that are licensed but have not yet received the early care and education program designation.

**Subdivision 6** requires the office to develop a definition of “trusted caregiver.”

**Subdivision 7** requires the office to develop a process for determining a list of professional associations that provide early care and education program accreditation. Provides the requirements for an association to be included on the list.

**Subdivision 8** requires the office to establish an evaluation and continuous improvement process that includes the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes for children and their families and periodic audits that assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the support and accountability system under subdivision 9.

**Subdivision 9** requires the office to develop a system that ensures support and accountability for child care providers and requires this system to include support teams. Provides the composition of the support teams and the duties of the support teams. Allows a member of a support team to fulfill more than one role and requires each child care provider to be assigned to a team.

**Subdivision 10** requires the office to provide specific resources for parents and caregivers.

**Subdivision 11** requires the office to make additional supports available to ensure child care programs are compliant with this section, including professional development for child care staff and grants.

**Subdivision 12** requires the office to develop clear, simple, and direct guidance on the rules, regulations, and consequences for any violations.

**Section 3 (Direction to commissioner of children, youth, and families; Amending the definition of education)** requires the commissioner of children, youth, and families to amend the definition of education for licensed child care centers to include additional accredited coursework.

**Section 4 (Direction to commissioner of human services; Background study liaison)** requires the commissioner of human services to designate a permanent child care background study liaison who timely communicates with licensed child care providers.

**Section 5 (Direction to commissioner of children, youth, and families; standardized licensing visit timeline and requirements)** requires the commissioner of children, youth, and families to develop and implement a standardized timeline and standards for the conduct of licensors when conducting inspections of licensed child care centers. Provides what the timeline and standards must include.

**Section 6 (Direction to commissioner of children, youth, and families; standardized county-delegated licensing)** requires the commissioner of children, youth, and families to develop training methods and ways of communicating with family child care county licensors, share certain information with family child care providers, establish timeframes for county licensors to respond to requests, and require county licensors to use the electronic licensing inspection tool during inspections.

**Section 7 (Direction to commissioner of children, youth, and families; child care provider support website)** requires the commissioner of children, youth, and families to develop and maintain a public website that provides certain information for providers on child care provider support options.



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