

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction

Written by Rebeka Hazelet, with Ann McKittrick

Script

1. Welcome to our training on the Texas Minimum Standards.
2. There could be many reasons why you are here, maybe you are an educator for a new school, a teacher who was asked to learn them, or a student earning your teaching degree and need to understand the standards better. Whatever your reason is, when you are finished with this training, you will have a good understanding of what is expected of you by the Texas Department of Family and Productive Services (DFPS).
3. Texas Minimum Standards is a system that is set up to be weighted, and each standard is weighted by the risk to children. The weights are: high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, and low. The weights of each item do not change based on the infraction. The severity of the infraction is assessed by the Licensing Representative, documented, and considered in conjunction with the standard weights when Licensing is making their decision.
4. During this training, you will learn about the heavily weighted items that will be the most important for you, as a teacher or caregiver, to have at the forefront of your mind. You will become familiar with the standards and how they apply to you.
5. Before we go any further, let's take care of some housekeeping... first, there's a Listening Sheet attached to this section. Take a moment to print it so you can write down the things you want to remember about the course.
6. Slide with directions
7. Second, let's talk about what you're going to learn. Our objectives for this course.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- a. Define the term caregiver and list 3 major responsibilities of the job
 - b. Explain ways to insure children's safety
 - c. Describe positive discipline techniques that licensing approves
 - d. Demonstrate understanding of teacher/child ratio and group sizes
 - e. Summarize regulations around record-keeping and medications
8. Caregiver

Even though your title may be teacher, co-teacher, or aid, licensing considers you a caregiver if you are someone whose duties include the supervision, guidance, and protection of a child.

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

www.texaschildcaretraining

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

9. Caregivers are also someone who would be counted in the child/caregiver ratio. Understanding the role of the caregiver and your responsibilities is the most important thing in learning the Texas Minimum Standards. (746.105)
10. Whether you are 18 or you are 98, there are certain requirements that a caregiver must meet. A caregiver needs to be 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or a high school equivalent. You need to have completed 8 hours of the required 24 hours of pre-service training. But don't forget, you only have 90 days, from your employment, to complete all 24 hours. (746.901) (746.1107) (746.1309)
11. In addition to the 24 hours of training, caregivers are required to have an orientation to the childcare center within 7 days of employment. Certain people are required to have CPR, first aid training, and transportation training. And although this might seem obvious, employees must be free of active tuberculosis and will also have to have their background checked. (746.1301)
12. Let's talk hours. Every year, caregivers must obtain at least 24 hours of training relevant to the age of the children for whom they provide care. Six of the hours need to be on child growth and development, guidance and discipline, age-appropriate curriculum, and teacher-child interaction. One of the hours should focus on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect. (746.1309)
13. *Question: How many hours must be completed every year on child growth and development, guidance and discipline, curriculum and teacher-child interaction??*
14. *Answer*
15. Competency, good judgement, and self-control, are important things to have in life, but also what licensing is looking for you to have, in the presence of children and when performing assigned responsibilities. Do you relate to children with courtesy, respect, acceptance, and patience? Good, you will make an amazing caregiver, children will respond well to you and licensing will also respond well to you because this is something they will be watching for. (746.1201)
16. Each child we have in our care, is unique and has potential. They also come from a variety of families and cultures. As educators, we need to recognize and embrace this. (746.1203)
17. With the difference in families and cultures, also come different ideals of what discipline and care is. Caregivers have the duty to ensure that no child is abused, neglected, or exploited while in the care of the center and if they suspect abuse, they need to report it to the DFPS. (746.1203)
18. Who is in class today? Who is absent? As a caregiver, you need to know which children are responsible for, which includes knowing their names and their ages. (746.1203)

19. Being flexible is an amazing characteristic great teachers have. Program activities need to be planned in a way that foster developmentally appropriate independence in children while you interact with children in a positive manner, but in a flexible way. (746.1203)
20. Your phone is ringing, you got a text, did you hear the new song by Sam Smith, what about that video on Facebook? Oh well, it will have to wait. Personal use of electronics, like cellphones, tablets, and videos cannot be used. Activities that are not directly involved with the teaching, care, and supervision of children have to wait until the children are no longer in your care. (746.1203)
21. These activities could include administrative, clerical, and even janitorial duties that take attention away attention from the children. What about meal prep? If there is fewer than 12 children in your care, then you may meal prep but if there are more, you have to wait. (746.1203)
22. If you have been around children, even for a short time, you know that they can get into trouble quickly. This why licensing wants and requires children to be supervised at all times. If you are the assigned caregiver for that child, you are accountable for that child's care. (746.1205)
23. This accountability includes being responsible for the ongoing activity of each child, appropriate visual and/or auditory awareness, physical proximity, knowledge of activity requirements and each child's needs. Their ages, individual differences and abilities, layout of the child care center and hazards and risks need to be taken into account. (746.1205)
24. The written activity plans that licensing describes is often called a lesson plan. Each school will have their own procedures for planning for children - so your plan may include much more than what's required. For example, you may include individualized activities for children to help them close learning or developmental gaps.
25. But for licensing purposes, the lesson plan needs include an outline of the daily routines and specific activities for each age group. The plan should also be followed by the caregivers responsible for that group and inclusive for all children, regardless of disabling or limiting conditions. (746.2203)
26. *Question: Can you have a general lesson plan for each week?*
27. *Answer*
28. What needs to be included in these plans? It is important to include the dates for which the activities are planned for and they must offer a variety. There should be a balance of active and quiet play which includes group and individual activities for both indoor and outdoor. The outdoor play should include using both small and large muscles, morning and afternoon. What if it is raining and you are not able to go outside? Do you have space for the children to play indoors? Always have a backup plan for those rainy days. (746.2205)

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

www.texaschildcaretraining

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

29. Breakfast, lunch, and snack time should be on the activity or lesson plan, as well as naptime. It is important to list not only caregiver-initiated activities but also child-initiated activities. Sometimes those happen spontaneously, and for those times, there should always be sufficient time for each activity, including some wiggle room, but maintaining routines so that children can progress at their own developmental rate. (746.2205)
30. Should that episode of Octonauts be included in the lesson plans? Yes, it should! Screen time may be included in the written activity plan (TV, videos, computer, or video games), if you also include alternative activities for children that do not want to participate.
31. Speaking of children who don't want to participate, there are always children who do not want to nap when it is naptime. Again, an alternative quiet activity for those children should be provided and listed. (746.2205) (746.2907)
32. Adam, a two-year-old, is upset with Bianca for taking his toy. Adam reacts to this injustice by taking the toy back and hitting her in the face with the toy. Jackson, a five-year-old in your care, did not want to wait in line behind Justin, so he pushed him to the ground. Justin hit his head on the concrete and is now bleeding. These are two examples of when children will need to be disciplined in your care. But what is appropriate discipline?
33. At some point, you will need to administer discipline, and sometimes multiple times a day. The type of discipline used must be appropriate to the child's level of understanding. The goal of discipline is to teach the child acceptable behavior and self-control so it needs to be individual and consistent. If your own child attends your center, you may discipline your child if it is with the same type of discipline other children would receive. (746.2803) (746.2807)
34. Positive discipline is the most effective way to teach children. This positive correction can be using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior. It can also be reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear and positive statements. When a positive method of discipline and guidance is used, this encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. (746.2803)
35. Redirecting or using brief supervised separation, or time out, from the group can be used. When it is appropriate for that child's age, use one minute for each year of age. For our examples of Adam and Jackson, they would sit out for 2 and 5 minutes respectively. (746.2803)
36. Depending on how you were raised, usually influences how you view discipline. Different cultures, different households, and different ideals of what discipline is, can make it tough when trying to discipline your own child. But licensing is very clear on what type of discipline is unacceptable in a center. There can be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. (746.2805)

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

www.texaschildcaretraining

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

37. Physically hurting a child is an unacceptable mode of discipline, even if that child is yours at the center. You cannot administer discipline by means of corporal punishments, spanking or using a belt or a paddle, or even threaten a child with corporal punishment. Within that, you cannot pinch, shake, or bite a child, and in addition, you cannot put anything in or on the child’s mouth. Food, naps, and use of a toilet are a right of children, and these cannot be taken away as punishment. (746.2805)
38. Physical punishments are not the only unacceptable way to administer discipline. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child and subjecting them to harsh, abusive, or profane language is very detrimental to their growth and development, and it is also a major strike for licensing. (746.2805)
39. We have discussed time outs with children and how they need to be an appropriate length of time for each child, based on their age. You cannot place a child in time out or sit them out in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet. You also cannot require a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child’s age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device. (746.2805)
40. *Question: Can you spank your own child when you are working in a child care center?*
41. *Answer*
42. Ratios. In any classroom you walk into, there will be many things posted on the walls. Mostly these things will be what the students are learning. But licensing is looking for some specific things. In the center, things like their license, inspection, and Keeping Children safe will need to be posted. But in your classroom, an emergency evacuation and relocation diagram must be on the wall and easy to see. You will also need to post the lesson, activity, plan for each group of children. (746.401)
43. Perhaps the easiest and quickest thing for someone from licensing to notice is the caregiver to child ratios. There are many reasons for teachers to be in correct ratio. Child safety and protection being the most important. Ratios are based on the children’s age, including their developmental age if a child with special needs in the class. All children must be included in the count of child to caregiver ratio, even if they are related to the director or employees. (746.1507)
44. Here’s a look at the number of children one caregiver may supervise and varies on the age of the children. This chart is available to print so that you may have it posted in your room. (746.1602)
- Let’s look at the numbers:

If the specified age of the children in the group is...	Then the maximum number of children one caregiver may supervise is...
---	---

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

[www.texaschildcaretraining](http://www.texaschildcaretraining.com)

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

0 – 11 months	4
12 – 17 months	5
18 – 23 months	9
2 years	11
3 years	15
4 years	18
5 years	22
6-8 years	26
9-13 years	26

45. You only have 2 infants in my center, both 8 months old, can you combine them in an older group and still be in ratio? If the children you are going to combine the infants with, are not more than 18 months older, the children can be combined. In this case, the class they will join, the children cannot be more than 26 months. (746.1603)
46. So, if you have two caregivers, you might wonder if you can double the number that each one can supervise right? No, not necessarily. The maximum number of children two or more caregivers may supervise is limited by the maximum group size. The maximum group size and number of children changes vastly by age. (746.1609) Let's look at another chart:
- 47.

If the specified age of the children in the group is...	Then the maximum group size and number of children two or more caregivers may supervise is...
0-11 months	10
12-17 months	13
18-23 months	18
2 years	22
3 years	30
4 years	35
5 years	35
6-8 years old	35
9-13 years	35

48. Karissa is working with Melody in the pre-k room. They have 17 children in attendance today. Melody needs to make a phone call with her husband and so she steps out of the room. While she

is on the phone, her husband asks if there is something in the car. Melody decides to go check. Melody thinks to herself, we are only 2 over ratio, and the kids are happily playing. While she is outside Melody runs into a parent from a previous year, they start talking. Could Melody and Karissa be violating licensing for Melody being outside?

49. Yes, they have violated the maximum number of children to be in the room with one caregiver. If a situation like this happens, call another teacher, aid, or floater, that is freely available to keep an eye on your classroom.
50. *Question: Can you just double the number of children, based on maximum children allowed for one caregiver, if I have 2 caregivers?*
51. *Answer*
52. Children. Ratios and age are important things to keep in mind. The ratios vary greatly between age groups because of how much attention and supervision is needed for those specific ages. Infants and toddlers require the most caregivers and the most attention to keep them safe and learning.
53. For developing infants, having a consistent caregiver is very important for emotional and social development. Individual attention needs to be given to each and every infant. This attention can be playing, talking, cuddling, and holding. Holding is especially important when the infant is upset. Remember, you cannot spoil an infant. (746.2401)
54. A caregiver should pay special attention to the infant's physical needs such as feeding and diapering. Do you talk to your little ones? You should! Talking to infants as they are fed, changed, and held, such as naming objects, singing, or even saying rhymes help to ensure bonding and language development. It is also something licensing will be looking for. (746.2401)
55. When you walk into a childcare facility, it is not hard to see which room is for infants. In this room there should be an adult sized rocker, individual cribs for each child, a hand washing sink, and a sufficient number of toys for the infants to be engaged with. But what about safety straps? If the babies are little and they can't roll, is it still necessary to have safety straps? (746.2405)
56. Of course, it is! If you use high chairs, swings, strollers, infant carriers, bouncer seats, or any similar equipment, they must have safety straps and they must be fastened whenever an infant is using the equipment. (746.2407)
57. *Question: T/F It is not important to talk to infants because they do not understand anything anyways.*
58. *Answer*
59. Opportunities, opportunities, opportunities! Opportunities is the name of the game for infants. They should be given plenty of opportunities for learning and developing! They should be, if the weather

permits, taken outside because this will keep them healthy. Infants should be afforded many opportunities for reaching, grasping, pulling up, crawling, and walking in a safe clean, and uncluttered areas. (746.2417)

60. Infants should also have sensory stimulation and opportunities for auditory stimulation. The sensory stimulation could be having the infants play with textured toys, washable dolls, and toy animals. The auditory stimulation could be playing music, talking to them, singing to them, or even toys with noises. (746.2417)
61. One way to stimulate an infant is to talk to them while you are feeding them or changing them. Infants that are younger than 6 months need to be held while they are being fed, but also those children that are unable to sit unassisted in a high chair while being fed. This is a great time to make conversation with the littlest ones and provide some emotional attachment. (746.2419)
62. It should be noted, that children should never have bottles propped up or supported with some object, while they are eating. An adult must hold the bottle. For those children who can sit unassisted and in a high chair, table food, or regular snacks and meals, should be provided. (746.2419)
63. Because infants cannot talk and cannot convey what they need by other ways of communication besides crying, it is important for the parents to know if they child has slept, eaten and how much, how many diapers and what kind, and how the child felt that day. A way that caregivers let the parents know is to keep track, a record, of the infant's day and provide to the parent when they retrieve their child. (746.2431)
64. When we are talking about infants, we followed the infants own biological clocks and their own schedules. When we are talking about toddlers, we need to think routines. Routines such as diapering, feeding, sleeping, and indoor and outdoor play times, should be maintained as closely as possible. And just like with infants, if possible, they should have care given by the same caregiver on a regular basis. (746.2501)
65. Individual attention is so important for all children. With infants, it helps with social and emotional development. Well, in the toddler years, it is still a priority. Toddlers should be given individual attention, such as playing, talking, and cuddling. Those cuddles are especially important when a toddler is upset and needs comforting. (746.2501) And you know what? Really, it's a priority for every age child!
66. Those opportunities again!!A toddler is full of wonder and exploration! Daily they should be given the opportunities for outdoor and indoor play. Toddlers should have plenty of time, and yes, you

- guessed it, opportunities, to use thinking skills and develop their senses. Stacking toys, sorting toys, puzzles, blocks, and toys that can be taken apart are recommended and beneficial. (746.2507)
67. Small muscle and large muscle development opportunities should be given to toddlers. For small muscle activities, bust out that playdough, those paintbrushes, the toy animals and people. For the large muscle, let them play on small riding toys, throw balls around and play instruments. And let's not forget, go outside and play! (746.2507)
68. When the children are a little older and they are in the prekindergarten age group, things start to change. The way the rooms are set up changes because the learning is taking a more specific path. In the room, there should be interest centers, or centers as they are commonly referred to. These should include dramatic play, block building, stories and books, science, art and music, and sensory centers. (746.2605)
69. In the classroom, you will not find tables, chairs, and nap equipment, and enough of these things for everyone. There needs to be lower shelving so that children can retrieve items they need safely and without direct supervision. This makes the children feel empowered and trusted. (746.2605)
70. Records. As a caregiver, you will need to be aware of the where and which records each of your children have onsite. These records must be immediately assessible to you and accessible to the parents during a parent conference or a conference with the director. Some of the records will be supplied by the parents and some by the school. (746.601)
71. The records that the parents will supply is a statement of the child's health from a health care professional, including their immunization record. Parents should also supply any health care professional recommendations or orders for providing specialized medical assistance to the child. (746.603)
72. What is this health statement that we need to have from parents? Simply put, it is a written statement from a health care provider who has examined the child and states that they are fit to take part in the child care program. This statement must be on file, with the center, within one week from the date of admission. (746.611)
73. Immunizations are a hot button item these days. But when it comes to licensing and requirements for your childcare center, it is about the records. Each and every child admitted must meet and continue to meet the immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. All immunizations must be completed by the date of admission. (746.613)
74. Wait! My sister's cousin's girlfriend's granddaughter doesn't believe in immunizations, how is her daughter in a childcare center?! Well, of course, there are exemptions for immunizations like

medical reasons or reason conscience. But even those, have to be documented and those records have to be kept by the childcare facility. (746.613)

75. *Question: Do all children have to be immunized?*

76. *Answer*

77. Documentation and record keeping is a critical thing for a childcare center. In the center, there has to be a tracking system for each child coming and going. This can be electronic or written on paper. This system must include the name of each child, the date, time of arrival, and time of departure. This needs to be signed by the parent and employee. (746.631)

78. But it isn't just the child that needs to have up to date records. The center must also have and maintain records for the personnel. Most importantly, is the proof of request for the DFPS background check for the employees. There should also be documentation showing the dates of the first and last day on the job. (746.901)

79. A copy of a photo identification, or current driver's license for those who transport a child in care needs to be in records. There also should be proof that the employee received a copy of the childcare center's operational policies and personnel policies. And remember those training hours? Yes, those need to be on file too. (746.901)

80. We discussed training hours at the beginning of this module. Maybe you completed those hours, maybe you are still completing those hours. But your hours need to be documented to verify that those requirements have been met. There should be a certificate on file, for each employee. (746.1329)

81. This is documentation will include your name, the date of training, the subject of training, who trained you, and the length of clock hours. Your CPR/first-aid training must be included in this document. (746.1329)

82. Medical and Release Forms

Everyone gets sick sometimes...

Children who are ill may not attend your childcare facility. If the child has an oral temperature of 101 degrees, a tympanic (ear) temperature of 100 degree, or axillary (armpit) temperature of 100, they cannot be allowed to attend the center. (746.3601)

83. Do you need permission to administer medicine? Even diaper rash cream? You do! You need this permission in writing, and that must be signed and dated. You can also obtain permission by electronic form, email, or by telephone for a single dose of medication. If you do receive written permission, the authorization does expire on the first anniversary of the date permission was given. (746.3803)

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

www.texaschildcaretraining

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

84. *A child shows up to your center and needs to have medication. They have a rash on their leg and it is bothering them. Is rash ointment cream considered medication?*

85. *Answer*

86. *Question: The class is playing outside and a child is stung by a bee. The child is crying and Benadryl would be helpful for the reaction. You remember seeing Benadryl a few months back in the child's backpack so you know they can have it. You check their file to see if the parent has signed off on Benadryl, they have not. Can you still give the medicine to the child, knowing that they had it in their backpack before?*

87. *Answer*

88. For mishaps, scraped knees, bumps and bruises, a first aid kit is a must and it is also required by licensing to be available in the child care center, during field trips, and while transporting all children. This should be: clearly labeled, kept sanitary and clean, easily accessible, stored in a location off employees are aware of, and out of reach of children. (746,4001)

89. If a child becomes sick, has a doctor's appointment, dentist appointment, or needs for any reason to be picked up, even for just regular pick up, they may only be released to a parent or a person designated by the parent. (746.4101)

90. How do we keep our children safe and ensure that we are releasing them to the correct family member or parent? The child care center needs to develop policies for releasing the children, including a plan to verify a person authorized to pick up the child. This plan may include a way to record the identity of the individual, an instant photograph, or recording their license number and car tags. The information should be kept for three months in the child's records. (746.4103)

91. *Question: A woman shows up at the center to pick up her grandson. The child runs to her screaming, "Grandma!" But she is not on the authorized pick up list. Since the child is obviously knows the woman, and she is his grandmother, can you release the child to his grandmother?*

92. *Answer*

93. Food and Sanitation

Meals and snacks are a must in a child care center. Children should be offered a meal or a snack at least every three hours. Drinking water must be available to each child and is served at every snack, mealtime, and after active play in a safe and sanitary manner. (746.3301)

94. *Question: Can food be offered as a reward?*

95. *Answer*

96. To keep everyone safe and healthy, the easiest thing to do daily is handwashing. Not just the children, but the employees need to wash their hands. Changing a diaper, using the restroom, before

Minimum Standards for Child Care: An Introduction™ Script

www.texaschildcaretraining

DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE

- feeding a child, after arriving at the center, after eating, drinking, or smoking, and even after cleaning, hand washing should be at the forefront of everything that needs to be done. (746.3413)
97. What about the children? Do they need to wash their hands as often as caregivers? Children are expected to wash their hands often! They need to wash their hands before eating, before playing in water, after using the restroom or having their diaper changed, after being outdoors or feeding and touching animals. It is a good idea to have the children wash their hands as soon as they enter the center. (746.3417)
98. Wow, there's so much to know about being responsible for the care and safety of children! Don't worry, you don't have to remember every little thing. If you don't have already access to a printed copy of Minimum Standards, you can go to www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/documents/Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf for a PDF of the complete document. Save it so you can refer to when you need to.

Now that you've come to the end of the course, let's review what we set out to learn. You should now be able to:

- a. Define what a caregiver is and list a few responsibilities of the job
 - b. Explain how to insure children's safety
 - c. Describe positive discipline techniques
 - d. Understand teacher/child ratio and group sizes
 - e. Summarize regulations around record-keeping and medications
99. Congratulations! You've finished. You are ready to hit the ground running with those children. One last thing, a quiz. When you've successfully answered 80% of the quiz questions, you'll be able to print your certificate.