

# MODERNIZING ANCHORAGE'S CHILD CARE LICENSING CODE

Aligning with State Standards to Support Families and Providers



# Presenters



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# Agenda

- Child Care in Anchorage: Current Context**
- Our Guiding Approach**
- Round One: Actions Taken**
- Round One Providers' Comments**
- Round One Key Takeaways**
- Additional Desired Outcomes**
- Round Two, Pillars of Priorities**
- Understanding the Priorities**
- Proposed Changes**
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# Child Care in Anchorage: Current Context



- The Municipality of Anchorage's (MOA) jurisdiction extends north, to the Knik River Bridge and south, to Girdwood. The State of Alaska (SOA) regulates areas outside the Municipality.
- ~93–94 licensed child care homes
- ~95–97 licensed child care centers
- 8,000 total licensed child care spaces
- Capacity remains relatively stable, with limited growth
- Openings and closures fluctuate month to month
- Providers face cost and administrative barriers that can limit participation and growth

# Our Guiding Approach

❖ Reducing Duplication

❖ Maintaining Safety

❖ Expanding Access

Guiding both Round One and Round Two updates of Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC)16.55

# Round One: Actions Taken

## **Reducing Cost Barriers**

- Eliminated licensing, renewal, and plan review fees
- Removed liability insurance requirement

## **Expanding Capacity**

- Increased home capacity (6 → 8 children) for the first year
- Aligned staff-to-child ratios with State standards

## **Increasing Flexibility**

- Removed minimum age requirement for enrollment
- Updated ratio staffing requirements for centers

## **Modernizing Requirements**

- Removed outdated bathroom requirements
- Updated playground inspection requirements

# Round One: Providers' Comments

- 32 provider comments across homes and centers
- ***“ONLY getting calls for infant care...”***
- ***“The increased ratio has helped with staffing...”***
- ***“But we are still experiencing low staffing...”***
- ***“Bathroom/sink placement changes will influence future expansion...”***
- ***“Code language is so confusing...”***

# Round One Key Takeaways

- Demand for child care; especially infant care, remains high
- Providers continue to operate at or near capacity
- Administrative and operational flexibility is critical
- Barriers still exist despite initial improvements and Round One changes
- Most providers continue carrying liability insurance voluntarily

# Additional Desired Outcomes

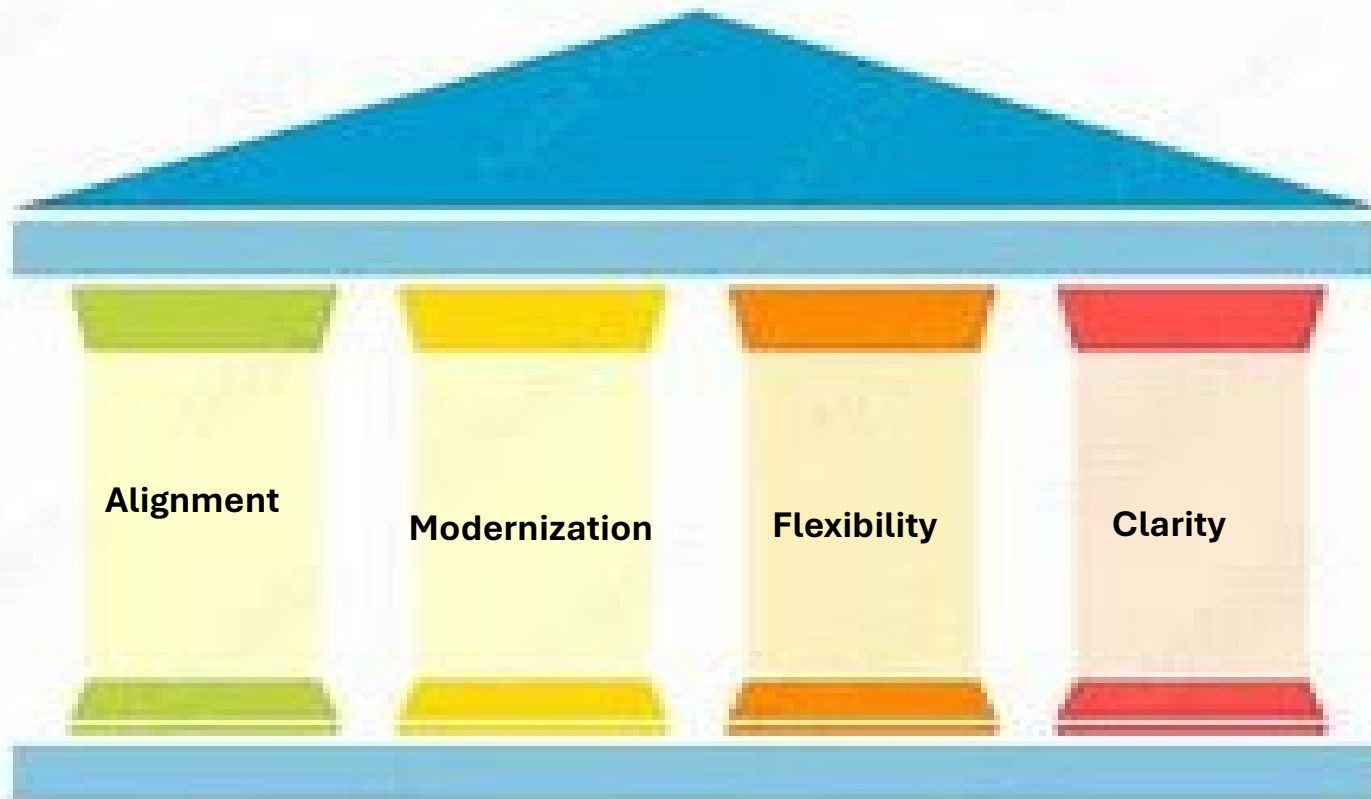
- Further alignment with state regulations
- Elimination of duplicative and outdated requirements
- Increased operational flexibility for providers
- Focus on reducing burden while maintaining safety

## **Summary:**

***Based on what we heard from providers, Round Two changes will focus on further reducing barriers, removing duplication, and increasing flexibility without minimizing safety standards.***

# Round Two Pillars of Priorities

Round Two was developed around four strategic priorities intended to improve alignment, reduce duplication, modernize outdated provisions, and support a more flexible and clear licensing framework.



# Understanding the Priorities

## **Alignment**

- Further align municipal code with State regulations where local standards exceed or duplicate State requirements.

## **Modernization**

- Update outdated provisions and terminology that no longer reflect current licensing practices.

## **Flexibility**

- Increase operational flexibility for providers while maintaining oversight and accountability.

## **Clarity**

- Create clearer, more consistent regulations that are easier for providers and families to understand.

# Proposed Changes

## **Staffing and Administrative Requirements**

### **Definitions**

- Remove outdated terms including Associate Administrator and Caregiver Aide
- Align terminology with State regulations

### **Child Care Home Operations**

- Remove requirement that administrators operate only in their residence or an unoccupied residential location

### **Adolescent Staffing**

- Remove outdated and more stringent municipal requirements
- Increase flexibility for after-school and adolescent staffing

### **Training Requirements**

- Remove outdated training format requirements
- Allow flexible online training options
- Remove obsolete FA/CPR language already addressed by State regulation

# Proposed Changes

## Health and Program Requirements

### Annual Physicals

- Remove annual physical requirement for children in centers
- Requirement exceeds State regulations
- Reduce burden for families and providers

### Nutrition Requirements

- Remove duplicative municipal nutrition requirements
- Align with State regulations and USDA standards
- Reduce conflicting or overlapping guidance

### Centers Serving Sick Children

- Remove outdated provision that was never implemented
- State regulations do not address dedicated sick-child centers

# Safeguards

## **Continued Oversight and Safety Standards**

### **State Oversight Remains in Place**

- All facilities remain subject to State licensing regulations
- Inspections and enforcement continue

### **No Reduction in Safety Standards**

- Changes remove duplication and outdated provisions
- Health and safety requirements remain governed by State regulation

### **Continued Local Requirements**

- Facilities must continue complying with zoning, fire, and life safety requirements

# Resource Links

## **MOA Child Care Licensing website:**

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/health/Childcare/Pages/default.aspx>

## **State of Alaska Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website:**

<https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>

## **State of Alaska Child Care Licensing Statute and Regulations:**

AS 47.32.010 – AS 47.32.900 Centralized Licensing and Related Administrative Procedures

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#47.32>

7AAC 57.010 – 7AAC 57.990 Child Care Facilities Licensing

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/aac.asp#7.57>

7 AAC 10.010 – 7AAC 10.9990 Licensing, Certification and Approvals

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/aac.asp#7.10>

# THANK YOU!



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