



## POLICY ADVISORY

*Field Operations 2024 - 10*

**Policy:** Exits and Evacuations in Family Child Care Programs

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2024

**Policy Link:** <https://www.mass.gov/lists/licensing-policies-for-family-child-care-providers>

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### OVERVIEW

In order to support educators in their efforts to ensure the safe and efficient evacuation of children from their programs, EEC has updated its Exits and Evacuations in Family Child Care Policy. Through this policy, EEC reinforces the regulatory requirements for Family Child Care homes to have two separate, EEC-approved exits to the outside. The updated policy also addresses the requirement that all educators develop an emergency preparedness plan that is current and accounts for the needs of all children.

### APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all licensed Family Child Care Programs.

### KEY UPDATES

- Clarified language:
  - The word “exits” has replaced the word “egress” throughout.
  - “Two exits” are defined as two separate doorways leading to ground level.
  - The word “separate” is clarified to mean that the two required exits are in different areas of the home, i.e. the two exits must not be two doors in sequence along an exit route.
- Elevators may not be used during emergency evacuations.
- Exits must be easy to open from the inside of the space under all lighting conditions and without the use of a tool or key.
- Added a section addressing Emergency Evacuations:
  - Required evacuation drill documentation must show that the educator practices drills from all EEC-approved exits.
  - EEC may ask educators to demonstrate an evacuation at any time.
  - Emergency evacuation plans must consider the mobility of the children and educators, as well as any household members who may need assistance walking.
  - The number of infants or non-mobile children the educator may care for may be limited by EEC based on the educator’s ability to safely and effectively evacuate children from the home.



## **RESOURCES**

If you have questions or need additional support, please contact your EEC licensor.

## **OBSOLETE**

This policy replaces EEC's Exits and Evacuations Policy that was previously released January 29, 2013.