



**Department of
Early Education and Care**
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Family Child Care, Small Group, Large Group and School Age Child Care Licensing

**POLICY STATEMENT: Procedures for the Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Children by
Transportation Providers and Parent/Program Notification
6.06 CMR 7.13**

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 12, 2011

AMENDED DATE: Effective October 1, 2012

Transportation is often a child's first encounter with the educational system each day. Safe, reliable transportation services represent an essential gateway for children and their families to access and participate in early education and out of school time settings.

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) requires that whenever transportation is provided or contracted by a program, including family child care as well as small and large group and school age child care, the program must ensure that the driver of the vehicle takes attendance before and after each trip and conducts a complete vehicle inspection after every trip to ensure that children are not left alone on the vehicle at any time. *See* 606 CMR 7.13(4)(j). The following early education and out of school time programs are exempt from EEC licensing requirements and, as a result, are not impacted by this transportation policy statement: any part of a public school system or any part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related pre-school services. *See* 606 CMR 7.02.

Transportation services are typically delivered by a Family Child Care System ("System") or an Early Education and Care Licensed or Approved Provider or Program (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Program") directly or through subcontractors. This policy sets forth the responsibilities and obligations of the Transportation Service Provider and the System or Program with respect to: (1) attendance and post-trip inspection of vehicles; and (2) parent notification of children who do not arrive at a child care program.

A Transportation Provider shall be defined as an individual or entity that is employed by or has subcontracted with a System or Program to provide transportation services, drives a child in a motor vehicle, van, bus, or school bus to or from a child care program, and is subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 90, §7B or §7D.

Responsibility for Pick-Up, Drop-Off and Tracking of Each Child:

(1) Passenger Log:

- a. A passenger log shall be used to track each and every child during transportation. (A sample passenger log has been provided by EEC.)
- b. The first and last name of each and every child received for transport shall be recorded on the passenger log. A sibling group shall not be listed as a single entry.
- c. The driver or a monitor assigned to the vehicle shall be responsible for completing the log.

(2) Pick-Up Procedures: The time the child was picked up shall be recorded on the passenger log.

(3) Drop-Off Procedures: The passenger log shall be updated immediately upon the child being released from the vehicle by recording the time the child was dropped off.

It is best practices that when an infant or toddler is picked up or dropped off at home, from a designated stop, or from a child care program, the parent/caregiver or other authorized person, such as a child care educator, initial the passenger log indicating that the child was placed on or received from the vehicle.

(4) Inspection to Confirm that No Child is on the Vehicle:

- a. Driver Responsibilities. As soon as possible after dropping off the last child, the driver shall ensure that all children have been dropped off by:
 - i. Physically walk through the vehicle;
 - ii. Inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior;
 - iii. Sign the passenger log, with the driver's full name and time, indicating that each and every child is unloaded; and
 - iv. Give the passenger log to either a monitor (e.g. an adult riding on the vehicle who is responsible for the supervision of a child being transported) or to an additional reviewer (e.g. an employee of or person designated by the Transportation Provider).
- b. Monitor or Additional Reviewer Responsibilities. A monitor who was also on the vehicle or another person designated by the Transportation Provider ("reviewer") shall:
 - i. Physically walk through the vehicle, in addition to the walk through required of the driver;
 - ii. Inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior, in addition to the inspection required of the driver;

- iii. Confirm that each and every child is no longer on the vehicle. The monitor or reviewer shall then sign the passenger log with the monitor's or reviewer's full name and time; and
- iv. Immediately notify the Transportation Provider and the child care program of any discrepancies on the passenger log (e.g., the number of children who boarded the vehicle does not match the number of children that were released from the vehicle).

Parent/Program Notification:

Effective communication between parents and early education and care providers promotes the safety and welfare of children both in and out of child care settings. Timely communication ensures that children are accounted for as soon as possible. **Parents and guardians must promptly notify the Program that their child will be absent or will arrive later than scheduled that day.**¹ The Program shall note on the attendance sheet the absence or late arrival of the child on the appropriate day and, if known, the name of the person who notified the program of the absence or the late arrival.

When a child, who is transported to a Program by a Transportation Provider, does not arrive within thirty minutes of his or her regularly scheduled arrival time and the parent or guardian has not provided notification of absence or delay, the Program shall immediately contact the Transportation Provider to determine whether the child was picked up that day, and if so, to determine the child's location. If the Transportation Provider cannot be reached, the Program shall then contact the parent or guardian to inform the parent or guardian that the child has not arrived. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached directly (i.e. if the Program does not directly speak with a parent), the Program shall then contact the child's emergency contact person. When a Program reaches a person who can confirm the location of the child, the Program shall note the location of the child, the name of the individual spoken to, and the time on the attendance sheet.

¹ Recurrent failure of a parent to notify the child care program of a child's absence may be the grounds for termination of a child care subsidy or may be grounds for dismissal from the program.