



POLICY ADVISORY

Policy Title: Safe Sleep for Infants

Policy Number: FO-26-05

Release Date: September 9, 2026

Effective Date: November 1, 2026

Policy Link: [Safe Sleep for Infants Policy](#)

OVERVIEW

Infants under the age of 12 months are at risk of Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is committed to supporting educators and families in their efforts to reduce this risk and keep infants safe in early education programs. Therefore, in accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (June 2022), EEC is updating its Safe Sleep for Infants policy, which is to be followed by all individuals caring for infants younger than 12 months old.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all EEC-licensed and funded child care programs.

KEY UPDATES

The following key updates have been made to EEC's Safe Sleep for Infants policy:

- **Swaddling:** Infants may not be swaddled unless a child's health care provider provides written documentation attesting to the medical necessity of swaddling. Programs may provide families with the new Infant Safe Sleep Exception Form, described below.
- **New forms:** Two new sample forms have been developed.

- The **Infant Safe Sleep Exception Form**, intended to be completed by the infant's health care provider, has been developed in response to requests from programs for clearer guidelines that outline what an order to sleep an infant alternatively to EEC policy or swaddle needs to include.
- The **Infant Jewelry Waiver Form**, intended to be completed by the infant's parent or guardian, has been created to allow for cultural consideration regarding infant jewelry in child care. The form encourages discussion between the family and program regarding the concerns around jewelry, program staff responsibility to remove jewelry from the sleep environment should it come loose, and a mutually agreed upon manner for storage of jewelry that has been removed.
- **Pacifiers:** A new section has been added to the policy to clarify that pacifiers are allowed so long as they do not include any extra components or attachments. The FAQ document has been updated to reflect that if an infant spits out the pacifier while sleeping, the pacifier may remain in the infant's sleep space.
- **Training Requirements:** The existing section has been updated to include the new requirements for annual completion of the EEC Essentials refresher course.
- **Compliance:** When a program is cited for not being able to provide a safe sleep environment for an infant, EEC staff will work with the program to try to find a compliant alternative for that infant. If, after consulting with the Supervisor, Manager, or Regional Director, no alternative can be found, then there is not a safe environment for the infant to sleep in and the infant must be sent home. The infant may return to care when the program can demonstrate to EEC that it can sleep the infant safely, in accordance with EEC regulation and policy.
- **Flexibility:** When a program receives a third Safe Sleep noncompliance, the program will no longer *automatically* be referred to EEC's Legal Unit for sanctions against the license. The decision to refer a program for sanctions will be at the discretion of the Regional Director and/or the Deputy Commissioner of Field Operations.

RESOURCES

- [Safe Sleep for Infants FAQs](#)
- [Safe Sleep for Infants Flyer](#)
- [Educator Safe Sleep Pledge](#)
- [Safe Sleep Letter to Parents/Caregivers: First Citation of Noncompliance Findings](#)
- [Safe Sleep Letter to Parents/Caregivers: Second Citation of Noncompliance Findings](#)

- [Infant Safe Sleep Exception Form](#)
- [Infant Jewelry Waiver Form](#)

OBSOLETE

This policy replaces EEC's previous Safe Sleep for Infants policy issued on October 1, 2023.