

Child Care and Early Education Frontline Licensing Staff Snapshot

Child care and early education (CCEE) licensing staff directly impact CCEE providers' experiences within the licensing system. This snapshot summarizes what we know about frontline licensing staff^a **qualifications, responsibilities, training/support, and caseloads**, using data from the 2017 Child Care Licensing Study.¹

Qualifications

Minimum entry level educational qualifications and experience requirements varied, but many states required frontline licensing staff to have a bachelor's degree or knowledge of early childhood (through a degree, courses, or experience in early childhood).



71% of states required a **bachelor's degree or higher**.



51% of states required **courses or degree specifically in early childhood**.



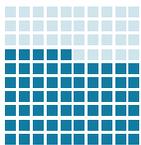
35% of states required **experience with children**.



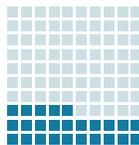
57% of states required a **degree/courses in early childhood and/or experience working with children**.

Staff Responsibilities

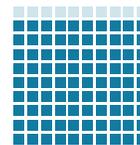
Frontline licensing staff were commonly responsible for inspecting both CCEE centers and family/group child care homes. Inspecting both types of settings requires familiarity with both sets of regulations and skills to work with and support both types of CCEE providers.



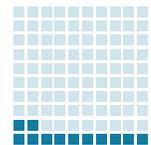
In **75% of states**, frontline staff were assigned to **inspect both centers and homes**.



In **25% of states**, frontline staff were assigned to inspect both **licensed and license-exempt centers and homes**.



In **90% of states**, frontline staff also conducted **complaint investigations**.



In **12% of states**, frontline licensing staff monitored **other human services programs for children and/or adults**.

Frontline licensing staff provided training, technical assistance (TA), and resources to CCEE providers across all setting types. These supports were more often focused on compliance than quality improvement.



In **over 95% of states**, frontline licensing staff provided TA, resources, and training to help CCEE providers (in centers and homes) **achieve compliance** with regulations. In **over 65% of states**, frontline licensing staff provided TA, resources, and training to **improve quality and exceed minimum requirements in CCEE centers and homes**.

In **over 95% of states**, frontline licensing staff also **referred CCEE providers** (in centers and homes) to other agencies, organizations, or people for TA.

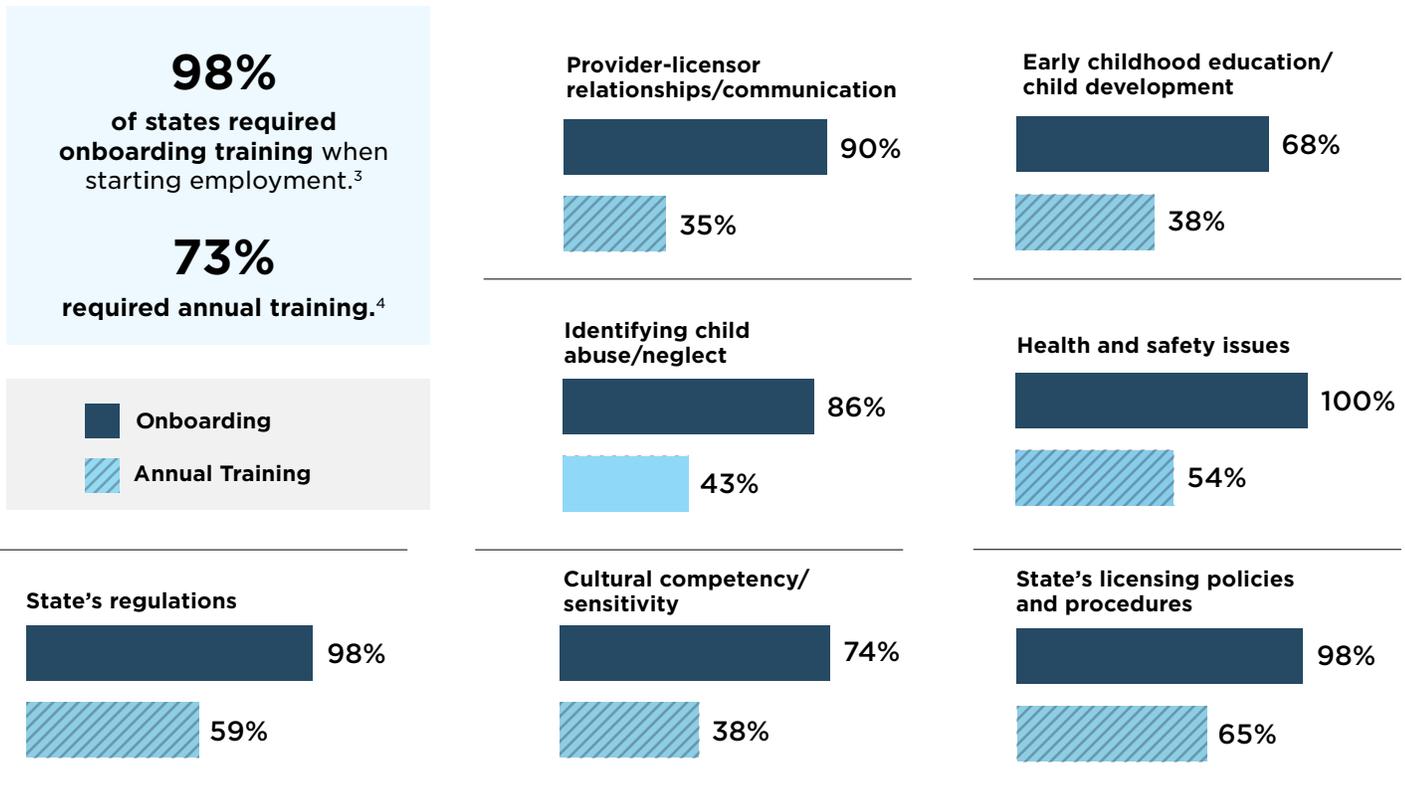
¹The findings presented in this brief are based on Child Trends' analysis of the [2017 Child Care Licensing Study](#). The analysis was limited to data gathered from all 50 states and Washington, DC. The data presented in this brief may not represent current monitoring practices, as state practices may have changed since 2017.

Training and Support

Interpretive guidelines^b and interrater reliability measures^c aim to improve consistency among frontline licensing staff. Guidelines also help CCEE providers understand how regulations are interpreted, the purpose they serve, and how they're enforced.



Annual training for frontline licensing staff was less common than training provided as a part of onboarding. When annual training was provided, it often focused on regulations and licensing policies/procedures. Few states provided annual trainings focused on provider communication, cultural competency, or early childhood education.²



² These data do not tell us about the quality of the trainings or what specifically the trainings cover under each topic area.

³ Fifty of the 51 participating states required onboarding training. Thus, 50 is the denominator for the percentages represented in the dark blue bars.

⁴ Thirty-seven of the 51 participating states required annual training. Thus, 37 is the denominator for the percentages represented in the striped light blue bars.

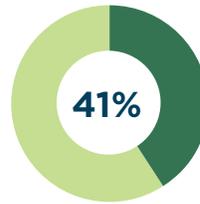
Caseloads

Caseloads are influenced by several factors, including the time spent onsite at homes or centers, the frequency of inspections, travel time, the additional responsibilities of frontline licensing staff, and the number of work weeks per year. As such, caseloads varied greatly between states. (See [Licensing Caseloads: Finding the Right Ratio of Licensors to Providers.](#))

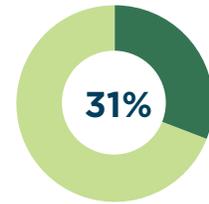
81 Average caseload of homes/centers

30-182 Caseload range

Workload analyses help licensing agencies understand licensors' workload and can be used to make caseloads more equitable. Fewer than half of states conducted a workload analysis in 2017.



41% of states conducted a **workload analysis**.



31% of states **used other positions or consultants** to offset the work typically done by frontline staff.

Definitions

^a **Frontline licensing staff:** Individuals who work for the state licensing agency and whose primary responsibility is to inspect child care facilities for compliance with regulations.⁵

^b **Interpretive guidelines:** Guidance manuals that help clarify requirements and ensure statewide consistency in administration of the licensing program.⁶

^c **Interrater reliability:** A measure of agreement among frontline licensing staff in their assessment of CCEE providers' compliance with regulations.

⁵ National Association for Regulatory Administration & National Child Care Information Center. (2006). *The 2005 child care licensing study: Final report*. National Association for Regulatory Administration. http://www.naralicensing.org/assets/docs/2005ChildCareLicensingStudy/2005_licensing_study_final_report_web.

⁶ National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance. (2017) *Interpretive guides for child care licensing regulations*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. http://www.naralicensing.org/assets/docs/2005ChildCareLicensingStudy/2005_licensing_study_final_report_web.

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