Georgia’s Approach for Monitoring Exempt Programs

Kristie Lewis
Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services
Efforts to Strengthen Exemptions Requirements – March 2012

- New rules became effective that strengthened exemption requirements
  - Required all exempt programs in Georgia to reapply under new rules and at anytime program had changes
  - Required a valid and current email address for program
  - Required program to obtain and keep records on children
  - Required program to maintain daily attendance records
  - Required parents to sign a notice that they were aware the program was exempt from licensure
  - Required program to post exemption notice and exemption approval letter from DECAL
  - Required program to post notice IF the program had no liability insurance
Current Exempt Programs Eligible for Subsidy Funding

- Government owned and operated*
  - Before and after care in public schools
  - Summer programs and full day camps
- Nursery school, playschool & kindergarten, etc. for ages 2-6 years for no more than 4 hours per day
- Day camps for ages 5 years & older
- Program for ages 5 years & older operated by national membership non-profit organization (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs)
Georgia’s Previous Monitoring Efforts and Compliance Data
Piloted Monitoring Approach – Summer 2013 and Summer 2014

- Identified a sub-set of experienced licensing consultants located across the state to conduct on-site monitoring visits
- Contacted programs before visiting to determine if program was still operating
- Sent letter to all programs in May and June explaining process and reason for visits
- Conducted webinar with consultants to outline procedures for monitoring
- Provided memo for consultants to give to exempt programs during site visit
Exempt Summer Day Camp Visit Project – July 2014

- Potential pool of sites to visit = 83 providers
- 67 sites visited at the following types of providers:
  - Government owned and operated = 30 sites
  - Day Camps (5 years and older) = 33 sites
  - Private Non-profit (5 years and older) = 4 sites
- Programs visited had a total of 1-151 active subsidy certificates
- 17 child care licensing consultants visited the sites between July 3-25, 2014 using an abbreviated Health and Safety Checklist
  - Internal tool developed and used to monitor informal care providers
# Health and Safety Checklist Tool

## BASIC HEALTH & SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR EXEMPT SUMMER PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name:</th>
<th>Visit Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff: Child Ratios</strong></td>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total # Children this date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Observations/Comments/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>591-1.1.09 Criminal Records Check</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were there current CRC’s on file for staff?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, please describe type</td>
<td>[PLACEHOLDER]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no, explain</td>
<td>[PLACEHOLDER]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>591-1.1.32(6) Supervision</strong></td>
<td>☐ NA (no children present)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were staff members physically present in the area and able to supervise all children?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Was observed supervision adequate?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no, explain</td>
<td>[PLACEHOLDER]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

[www.decal.ga.gov](http://www.decal.ga.gov)
Exempt Summer Day Camp Visit Project 2014 – Potential Site map
## Summer Exempt Programs

Subsidy Certificates Data (Summer 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of active CAPS certificates</th>
<th>Data as of 6/15/14</th>
<th>Data as of 7/15/14</th>
<th>Data as of 8/15/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10 certificates</td>
<td>57 sites</td>
<td>66 sites</td>
<td>26 sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-25 certificates</td>
<td>2 sites</td>
<td>4 sites</td>
<td>1 site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50 certificates</td>
<td>5 sites</td>
<td>5 sites</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+ certificates (actual #)</td>
<td>1 site (118)</td>
<td>2 sites (57/151)</td>
<td>1 site (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>65 sites</td>
<td>77 sites</td>
<td>28 sites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Exempt Summer Day Camp Visit Project 2014 Findings Summary *(based on 67 visits)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Yes (Met)</th>
<th>No (Not Met)</th>
<th>Not observed/ N/A</th>
<th>Not reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Were staff:child ratios met?</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were CRC’s on file for staff?</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was adequate supervision maintained?</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 (children not present during visit)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was playground enclosed?</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11 (no playground on premises)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was playground free from hazards?</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11 (no playground on premises)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were facility premises free from hazards?</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exempt Summer Day Camp Visit Project 2014
Findings Summary (based on 67 visits)

- Transportation provided by 60 of 67 sites visited
  - Improper restraints reported at 3 sites (of those able to be observed)

- Pool on premises at 31 of 67 sites
  - Not adequately fenced or secured at 3 of 31 sites

- Discipline observed at 40 of 67 sites; inappropriate discipline reported at only 2 sites

- Local approvals:
  - 13 sites did not have a certificate of occupancy
  - 11 sites did not have fire marshal approval
  - 19 sites did not have zoning approval
Opportunities

Monitoring will help DECAL acquire a better understanding of programs and services

- Use Georgia’s current core rules to monitor exempt programs in an abbreviated way
- Use current licensing database to develop a specific template for exempt monitoring
- Use past monitoring project to develop a system of enforcement that is applicable to the abbreviated monitoring of exempt programs

Potentially develop licensing standards applicable to exempt programs in the future
Other Considerations

- Determine which exemptions would continue to receive subsidy and other benefits
- Build on work of previous exemption task force recommendations
- Determine the impact of exemptions on Georgia economy
- Include programs in QRIS as an alternative to licensing – major public awareness campaign launching in 2016
- Engage parents in the process (e.g., focus groups)
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
For more information, contact...

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