

Changes proposed to increase child safety at licensed early learning and child-care facilities ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

FREDERICTON (GNB) – Amendments have been proposed to the Early Childhood Services Act to increase the safety of children receiving services at licensed early learning and child-care facilities.

The amendments focus on clarifying licensing requirements, including regarding the suitability of employees and the requirement for criminal record checks for all staff who have contact with children; protecting children by giving the minister explicit authority to immediately revoke a facility's licence in order to protect the health and safety of children; and ensuring operational safeguards for relicensing so families are not left without services due to process delays.

"Ensuring our children can receive services in a healthy, safe and inclusive environment is not optional, it is an absolute necessity," said Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Dominic Cardy. "The amendments proposed are designed to address issues and challenges that have been identified since the act was first proclaimed and make it possible to provide the highest quality services to New Brunswick families."

The Early Childhood Services Act was proclaimed in February 2018.

"The proposed amendments were designed the way amendments should be designed: based on operational experience and best practice," said Cardy. "Taking steps to address gaps in the existing legislation will better enable the act to live up to its purpose and goals."

The bill also includes amendments that give the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development authority to exchange information in the development of an online registry to help connect parents looking for child care with operators who have space, as well as amendments ensuring all facilities provide children and families with an inclusive environment.

Related link:

Region: New Brunswick ^[3]

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