

## What is the Bureau of Certification?

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) –**Bureau of Certification** is responsible for certifying (licensing) child care facilities in Pennsylvania. There are approximately 7,700 child care programs in Pennsylvania. Beginning December 29, 2015, all child care programs (family, group center) must be certified, including pre-service and annual inspections.

- **Certification** is a form of regulatory administration.
- **Regulatory Administration** is governmental regulation of that private enterprise which involves public interest.

The body of law which encompasses certification/licensing is referred to as administrative law. Administrative law is concerned with the powers and procedure of administrative agencies and embodies constitutional law, common law, statutory law and agency made rules that have the force of law.

## Purpose of Certification/Licensing:

- Certification is a form of regulatory administration
  - Responsible for developing and promulgating rules
  - Decision making - certification issuance, status and terms
  - Enforcement - Inspects child care facilities to determine compliance with established regulations and suppresses illegal operations.

## Authority:

- Certification derives its authority from statute
  - **Statutes-** Pa 55 Code Ch 20; Articles IX and X of the Human Services Code; and Chapters 3270 (Center), 3280 (Group), and 3290 (Family) are the foundations for regulation of child care facilities:
    - Outlines the requirements for supervision and certification mandate.
    - Gives the Department of Human Services (DHS) authority to promulgate regulations.
    - Gives DHS full and free access to facility, grounds, records, staff and children in care.
    - Terms of licensure and registration.
    - Technical assistance.
    - Negative sanctions.

## The Bureau:

- Division of Regulatory Administration
- Four Regional Offices oversee all 67 counties of the state. Staff from these offices conduct inspections and verify complaints. If Early Intervention staff see violations in a child care program, they may contact the Regional Office with this information.
  - Central Region – Harrisburg
  - Northeast Region – Scranton
  - Southeast Region – Philadelphia
  - Western Region – Pittsburgh

For more information, visit the Department of Human Services website at <http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/earlylearning/index.htm>.