



Office of Child Care
U.S. General Services Administration

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

DRAFT--An Executive Order- Federally Sponsored Child Care

Federal parents, like all parents, struggle to balance their responsibilities at work and their responsibilities to their children. Parents deserve to know that their children are healthy, safe and well nurtured during the workday. The Federal government sponsors over 1,000 child care centers throughout the country, and it is essential that these centers follow uniform health, safety, program and facility guidelines, and that criminal history background checks for staff be conducted. Executive branch child care programs beyond those sponsored by the Department of Defense (DoD) should have such uniform guidelines, and all agencies do not uniformly conduct criminal history background checks of staff before they are permitted to work with young children. Today I am directing the Administrator of General Services Administration (GSA) to take the lead to improve the quality of Federally sponsored non-military child care in the Executive branch, as follows:

- 1. In consultation with the Interagency Federal Child Care Council (IFCCC), develop regulations outlining health, safety, program and facility guidelines for all non-military Executive agency child care programs; and lead the implementation of such regulations.**
- 2. Provide consistent mechanisms through which agencies can verify compliance with the regulations and provide timely information on compliance to the Administrator and to the public.**

I am also mandating that all child care facilities located in space that is owned or leased by a non-military Executive agency become accredited no later than the year 2005, by a nationally recognized accrediting organization. I further direct that complete criminal history background checks be conducted for all employees at executive agency child care centers located in federally owned or leased space by then end of 2001.

I direct the Administrator of GSA, in consultation with the IFCCC, to issue regulations on health, safety, facility, and provide program guidelines to ensure the health and well-being of children in child care programs sponsored by non-military Executive agencies. The Administrator and the IFCCC will develop procedures for Executive agencies to follow when centers are not in compliance with established health, safety, program and facility requirements. These procedures will require affected centers to develop corrective action plans.

The Administrator may provide technical assistance to non-military Executive agencies and entities sponsoring child care centers in executive facilities in order to assist agencies in complying with provisions of this order.

The Administrator will also develop a child care portal on the Internet which will serve as a single point of entry for all Federal child care information and services, available to the public. The portal will be a means for Executive agencies to use to provide information on their programs, such as accreditation.

Finally, I direct the Administrator to submit an annual report to the President summarizing agency compliance with the child care guidelines established by this order.

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Dear Provider:

As you may be aware, on March 10, 1998 President Clinton issued a Memorandum to the Heads of all Federal Departments and Agencies in which he stated that it was the Administration's goal to improve the quality of Federally sponsored child care in the Executive Branch. One of the stated goals of the President was to ensure that all eligible child care centers in Federal space achieve independent accreditation by the Year 2000.

GSA has been in the forefront of the movement to ensure high quality child care centers in Government sponsored space for some time. As early as 1991 GSA determined that accreditation by an independent evaluation organization was one step that we could take to ensure high quality child care in our centers. The standards and the procedures established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) were deemed by GSA to embody the high quality standards that we were striving to meet. Thus, as part of the license agreement that all vendors that operate a child care center in GSA space must sign, there is a condition that all eligible centers must become accredited by NAEYC within 2 years of signing the license agreement.

You operate a Child Care Center in the XYZ Building, address, City, State. On _____ (date) you signed a Revocable License Agreement with GSA. Section 4 of that Agreement, Terms and Conditions of Occupancy, states:

"The Child Care Provider shall begin the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation process within one year of operation and will achieve accreditation within one year of beginning the process. The Child Care Provider will maintain accreditation through the renewal process of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Providers who are unable to achieve and maintain accreditation will be subject to termination"

Our records reveal that you have failed to meet the conditions established in Section 4. We take the requirement for accreditation very seriously, especially in light of the President's Memorandum to us. We must, therefore, require you to submit a detailed, time phased action plan for obtaining accreditation of this facility. Please submit the plan within 14(?) days of receiving this letter. If we do not receive your action plan within this time frame, we will be forced to take action as specified in the License Agreement.

If you have any questions please call your Regional Child Care Coordinator or contact Jill Rhea (215) 656-5994 or Nancy Norris (404) 331-1851 of the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise for information or help with your plan.

Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to our continued partnership and to presenting your center with GSA's accreditation award at the next GSA Child Care Conference.

Sincerely,

Bileen Stern
Director,
Child Care Operations
Center of Expertise