



OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD 2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD

(Budget implementer bill summary is in separate document)

The following is a compilation of public acts passed during the 2023 regular legislative session concerning early childhood matters and/or impacting the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) operations. This is only a summary. These summaries are based on both the actual bill language and the bill analysis prepared by the General Assembly's Office of Legislative Research (OLR). The complete text of each public act can be reviewed and may be accessed by clicking on the Public Act Number below or visiting the Connecticut General Assembly's web site at cga.ct.gov.

P.A. 23-29 (H.B. 5049) - AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY FAMILY CHILD CARE SERVICES

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00029-R00HB-05049-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Exempts from child care licensing from the Office of Early Childhood programs that exclusively provide care for children of members of the United States Coast Guard or any branch of the military under the United States Department of Defense and that are (A) administered by the federal government or on federal property, or (B) administered by a person certified as a family child care provider by the United States Coast Guard or a branch of the military under the United States Department of Defense. *(Effective upon passage)*

P.A. 23-72 (H.B. 6573) - AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO DIAPER CHANGING TABLES IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00072-R00HB-06573-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Requires the state building inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee, jointly, and with the administrative service commissioner's approval, to include in the next proposed revision to the State Building Code a requirement that certain buildings have at least one safe, sanitary, and convenient baby diaper changing table. The new requirement for the next State Building Code revision applies to 1. certain newly constructed or substantially renovated public buildings (e.g., state, municipal, religious, and educational buildings); or 2. places of public accommodation, resort, or amusement (i.e., those that cater to or offer services, facilities, or goods to the general public). *(Effective upon passage)*

P.A. 23-90 (H.B. No. 6900) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH POLICY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00090-R00HB-06900-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Changes the name of the Behavioral and Mental Health Policy Oversight Committee to Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee and defines behavioral health as mental health and substance use disorders, as well as overall psychological well-being. Requires the speaker of the House and the president pro tempore of the Senate to each select one chairperson and increases the number of committee members by four. specifies that the committee will hold its first meeting by September 1, 2023, and changes its initial reporting deadline to December 1, 2023, and its final reporting deadline to December 1, 2024. The Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood, or designee, is a member of the Committee. *(Effective upon passage)*



P.A. 23-97 (S.B. 9) - AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00097-R00SB-00009-PA.PDF>

Sec. 30 - Requires the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Department of Social Services to collaborate with the Office of Early Childhood and create a plan to allow parents in substance use disorder treatment to qualify for child care supports and subsidies. The DMHAS and DSS commissioners must jointly report on the plan to the Human Services and Public Health committees by January 1, 2024. *(Effective upon passage)*

P.A. 23-101 (S.B. 2) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS OF CHILDREN

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00101-R00SB-00002-PA.PDF>

Sec. 3 & 4 - Makes the \$200 general administrative payment (GAP) permanent for Birth-to-Three program early intervention service providers for each child with an individualized family service plan that accounts for less than nine service hours during the billing month. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 5 – The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) must be translated into and provided in Spanish for any family whose primary language is Spanish. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 6 - Requires an eligible child whose primary language is Spanish to receive early intervention services from Spanish speaking personnel and a Spanish-speaking service coordinator. If there is no Spanish-speaking qualified personnel or Spanish-speaking coordinator available within the statewide Birth-to Three system to provide early intervention services, then a Spanish speaking interpreter or translator must be provided. These interpreters or translators must be reimbursed at the same rate as judicial branch court-appointed interpreters and translators. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 15 - Expands duties of Task for to Study Children’s Needs to (1) review and analyze certain programs that received COVID-19-related federal funding, (2) make recommendations on which programs should receive a more permanent funding structure, and (3) conduct a needs assessment focused on children who were enrolled in a Connecticut high school and a member of the classes graduating from 2020-2023. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-118 (H.B. 6565) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PLAN OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF CHILD CARE CENTERS NEAR CAMPUSES

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00118-R00HB-06565-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Extends the date to January 1, 2024, for the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to submit a child care plan to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. Under current law, the BOR, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), must develop a plan to increase the number of OEC-licensed child care centers or group child care homes on or near each regional community technical college and state university campus. The plan must include the expansion and maintenance of child care facilities that (1) are utilized by an early childhood education program for instructional purposes or (2) provide evening and weekend child care services in accordance with college or university course schedules.



The bill adds new provisions to the plan, including 1) an assessment of the student body's child care needs and the existing child care services and facilities available on each campus or in the surrounding community; 2.) opportunities for collaboration with other state agencies, federal programs, community organizations, or nonprofit organizations to carry out the plan; and 3) a budget and implementation timeline for the plan. *(Effective upon passage)*

P.A. 23-137 (H.B. 5001) - AN ACT CONCERNING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00137-R00HB-05001-PA.PDF>

Sec. 13 - Requires the Office of Policy & Management to create a plan to develop a secure online portal to share basic critical information across agencies to ensure efficient and safe services delivery. The plan must be developed in consultation with the Departments of Administrative Services, Aging and Disability Services, Children and Families, Developmental Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Corrections, Social Services, Education, and the Office of Early Childhood. The portal must include a means for each agency to note when it has performed a site visit or has scheduled a site visit and shall give the individual performing the site visit the opportunity to record notes that can be shared across agencies. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Requires the plan to (1) review the feasibility of using existing state agency online portals, or a new online portal; (2) detail data sharing and privacy requirements for sharing this information across state agencies in accordance with state and federal law; and (3) be submitted to the Appropriations and Human Services committees by July 1, 2024. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 28 – Requires the Office of Early Childhood and the Departments of Developmental Services, Aging and Disability Services, Children and Families, the Labor Department, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Public Health, Social Services, and Correction to each appoint an employee to act as a liaison to the Department of Education's State-wide Transition Services Coordinator, established pursuant to section 26 of this act. Each liaison shall provide information and advice to such coordinator concerning the transition resources, transition services and public transition programs provided by the agency such liaison represents. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 50 - Requires the Birth to Three individual service coordinator, not later than three months prior to the third birthday of an eligible child, to notify the parent or guardian of the child that the parent or guardian may meet, upon request, with the coordinator to discuss the contact information for the person responsible for the administration or coordination of special education services for the school district in which the child resides. Not later than three months prior to the third birthday of the child, the coordinator must provide the person responsible for the administration or coordination of special education services for the school district with the individualized family service plan for the child. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-142 (H.B. 6590) - AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN PROTECTIONS FOR GROUP AND FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00142-R00HB-06590-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Zoning regulations cannot require special permits or exceptions for operating family or group



child care homes located in a residence. Municipal zoning regulations are prohibited from treating group child care homes different than single- or multi-family dwellings. On December 1, 2023, each municipality's CEO must submit annually to OPM a sworn statement that the municipality's zoning ordinances comply with these zoning requirements or identify the specific timeframe within which the municipality will bring its zoning ordinances into compliance. *(Effective October 1, 2023)*

Sec. 4 - Any inspection by the Office of Early Childhood of a group child care home located in a residence must include an inspection for evident sources of lead poisoning and shall provide for chemical analysis of any paint chips found on such premises. In addition, a municipality may not subject the operation of a licensed group child care home located in a residence to any conditions, other than those imposed by the commissioner, if the group child care home complies with all codes and ordinances applicable to single and multifamily dwellings. *(Effective October 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-147 (S.B. 986) - AN ACT PROTECTING MATERNAL HEALTH

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00147-R00SB-00986-PA.PDF>

This bill addresses several issues related to maternal and infant health, including freestanding birth centers, maternity hospital license, Infant Mortality Infant Relief program, Infant Mortality Review Committee, Doula Advisory Committee, voluntary doula certificate program, midwifery working group, and universal home visiting program. Specific to the Office of Early Childhood:

Sec. 16 - Requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) commissioner, within available appropriations, to develop a statewide program offering universal nurse home visiting services to all families with newborns living in the state to support parental health, healthy child development, and strengthen families, in collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioners and the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) executive director. Under the bill, "universal nurse home visiting" is an evidence-based nurse home visiting model in which a licensed registered nurse with specialized training provides in-home services to families with newborns.

When developing the program, the commissioners and executive director must: 1) consult with insurers that offer health benefit plans in the state, hospitals, local public health authorities, existing early childhood home visiting programs, community-based organizations, and social service providers and 2) maximize available federal funding.

The program must be designed to improve outcomes in one or more of the following areas: 1) child safety, health, and development; 2) family economic self-sufficiency; 3) maternal and parental health; 4) positive parenting and parent-infant bonding; 5) reducing child mistreatment and family violence; and 6) any other appropriate area the commissioners and executive director establish in writing. Services must be voluntary and have no negative consequences for a family that does not participate. Services may be offered in every community in the state and to all families with newborns based on the full extent of available provider capacity.

Services must also allow families to choose up to a certain number of additional visits, consistent with an evidence-based model; provide information and referrals to address each family's identified needs; and include: 1) an evidence-based assessment of the physical, social, and emotional factors affecting a family receiving these services; 2) at least one visit during a newborn's first three months or other

timeframe the commissioners and executive director deem appropriate and that is consistent with an evidence-based model; and 3) a follow-up visit within three months or another time frame established by the model after the last visit.

The DSS commissioner may seek federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approval for a Medicaid state plan amendment or waiver for universal nurse home visiting services coverage.

Requires the OEC commissioner, in collaboration with the DSS and DPH commissioners and OHS executive director, to collect and analyze program data to: 1) assess the program's effectiveness in meeting its goals and 2) collaborate with other state agencies to develop protocols for sharing the data, including doing so in a timely manner with primary care providers that provide care to families with newborns receiving program services. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-150 (H.B. 6762) - AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOLS

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00150-R00HB-06762-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 – For FY25, increases the School Readiness per child rate for full-day, full year preschool from \$8,924 to \$10,500. Statute requires that Child Day Care Rates cannot be less than School Readiness rates. Therefore, the increased per child rate applies to both state funded School Readiness and Child Day Care programs for full-day, full-year preschool slots. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 2 - Creates a Protective Services Category in the Care 4 Kids program for children who are in foster care, adopted children from one year of the date of adoption, and homeless children and youths. This expedites enrollment of these populations into child care, using a Care 4 Kids child care subsidy. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 3 - Allows any licensed child care center, group child care home, or family child care home to administer epinephrine cartridge injectors to a child experiencing an allergic reaction without having a prior written authorization of a parent or guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. The person administering epinephrine must have training to do so. The parent or guardian may submit, in writing, to the child care provider that epinephrine shall not be administered to their child. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 4 – Changes the name from early childhood “councils” to early childhood “collaboratives.” *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-159 (H.B. 6880) - AN ACT CONCERNING ASSORTED REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00159-R00HB-06880-PA.PDF>

Sec. 3 – Changes the kindergarten entry age of 5 from January 1 to September 1. (Effective July 1, 2024)

Sec. 13 – Allows a teacher with a (1) grade one through six endorsement to teach kindergarten for a second year, or (2) grade one through comprehensive special education endorsement to teach preschool in addition to kindergarten. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*



P.A. 23-160 (H.B. 6882) - AN ACT CONCERNING MANDATE RELIEF

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00160-R00HB-06882-PA.PDF>

Sec. 35 & 37 - Lowers the eligibility age of children for the School Readiness preschool program to birth, rather than age three. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 36 - Changes School Readiness Grant awards from annually to every two years to align with the biennial budget and Child Day Care contracts. Also repeals a requirement that any School Readiness rate increase be used exclusively for staff salaries. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 38 – Repeals the requirement that any Child Day Care rate increase be used exclusively for staff salaries. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 39 - Removes the sunset date of the Smart Start Program allowing the program and funding to continue serving children in public schools. The bill makes the program permanent with no end date. Also removes reference to eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch in order to align enrollment policy across OEC state funded program based on income. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 40 – Establishes the Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet. The Parent Cabinet must advise the OEC on ways to strengthen partnership and communication with families, bring awareness to gaps and barriers to services, increase access to services for families and help make improvements to the lives of young children and families in the state. *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

Sec. 41 – Establish a Care 4 Kids two-tiered income eligibility threshold that conforms with federal regulations 45 CFR 98.21(b). *(Effective July 1, 2023)*

P.A. 23-183 (S.B. 1090) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN MINORS AS YOUTH CAMP STAFF MEMBERS AND LIFEGUARDS

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00183-R00SB-01090-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 - Allows 15-year-olds to work as youth camp staff members or lifeguards under supervision by someone age 18 or older. 15-year-olds subject to existing law's restrictions, which limit working: 1. during school vacations when school is not in session for at least five consecutive days, with a limited exception for jobs in retail food stores; 2. a maximum of 40 hours per week and 8 hours per day; and 3. between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., or until 9 p.m. from July 1 to the first Monday in September. Requires employers of 15-year-olds working as youth camp staff members or lifeguards, except municipalities, to get a certificate documenting the employee's age, often referred to as working papers. The employer must keep the documentation on file and make it available to the Department of Labor for inspection. No such certificate is required by minors employed by a municipality as a staff member at a youth camp or as a lifeguard. *(Effective upon passage)*

P.A. 23-208 (H.B. 5003) - ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION FUNDING IN CONNECTICUT

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00208-R00HB-05003-PA.PDF>

Sec. 1 – Amends Sec. 3 of House Bill 6880 (passed in the current 2023 session) that changed the kindergarten entrance age of 5 years old to September 1. This bill allows a parent to request to enroll a



child not yet age 5 by September 1 into kindergarten.

A child who has not reached the age of five on or before the first day of September of the school year may be admitted (1) upon a written request by the parent or guardian of such child to the principal of the school in which such child would be enrolled, and (2) following an assessment of such child, conducted by such principal and an appropriate certified staff member of the school, to ensure that admitting such child is developmentally appropriate. (*Effective July 1, 2024*).

P.A. 23-205 (H.B. 6942) - An Act Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State and Concerning Grant Programs, State Construction Related Thresholds, School Building Projects, Resources and Support Services for Persons with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability, Failure to File for Certain Grand List Exemptions, Elections, and Other Items Implementing the State Budget

Sec. 104 – Requires the OEC to submit a report to the Committee on Children by February 1, 2024, concerning child care and other early childhood services available in high poverty-low opportunity census tracts. In Sec. 101 of this act, “high poverty-low opportunity census tract” means a United States census tract in which thirty per cent or more of the residents within such census tract have incomes below the federal poverty level, according to the most recent five-year United States Census Bureau American Community Survey. The report must include:

(1) Providing an asset map of services currently available to support families with young children in the high poverty-low opportunity census tracts identified on the list compiled pursuant to subsection (b) of section 101 of this act;

(2) Identifying the number of children and families in need of support in such census tracts and providing a plan, which includes identifying the necessary staffing and funding, to assure that each child under five years of age and their families will have access to early childhood services, including, but not limited to, home visits, child care, access to family resource centers and health care; and

(3) Providing a plan to prioritize early childhood services and assess the cost of assuring that such services are available and accessible in such census tracts. (*Effective upon passage*)

S.R. 31 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (CSEA-SEIU LOCAL 2001).

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/FC/PDF/2023SR-00031-R000849-FC.PDF>

H.R. 32 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (CSEA-SEIU LOCAL 2001).

<https://cga.ct.gov/2023/FC/PDF/2023SR-00031-R000849-FC.PDF>

Under both Senate and House resolutions, this is the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and the Connecticut State Employees Association (CSEA- SEIU Local 2001). This agreement covers the period July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2026 and applies to family child care providers (licensed and unlicensed).