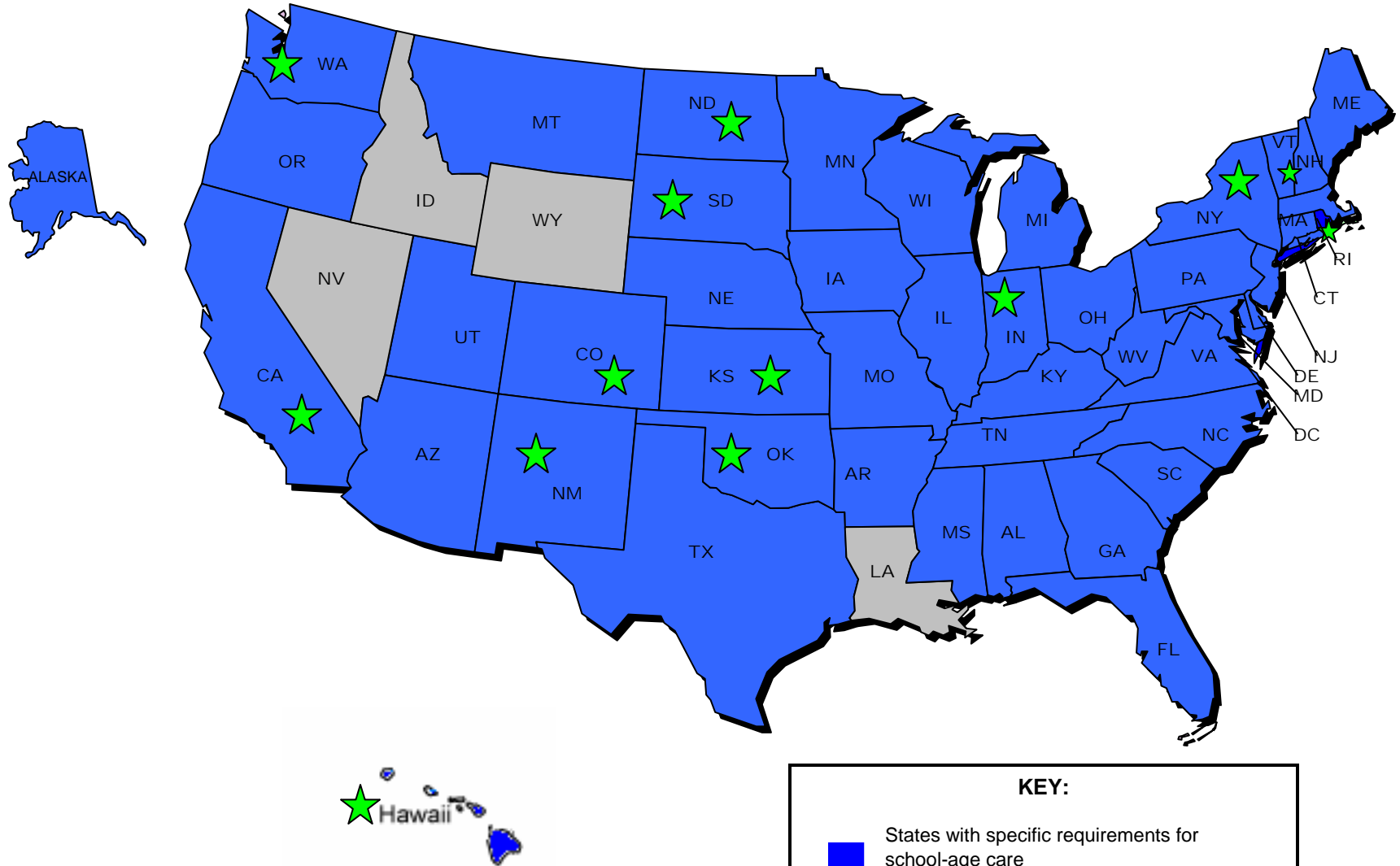


# Quick Facts on School-Age Care: Trends in Licensing Regulations



**KEY:**

- States with specific requirements for school-age care
- States that do not have specific requirements for school-age care
- States with stand-alone school-age licensing regulations



## **Quick Facts on School-Age Care: Trends in Licensing Regulations**

Child care licensing regulations provide a baseline of health and safety requirements that child care programs must meet in order to operate in a given state. 46 states and the District of Columbia have specific requirements for school-age care within their licensing requirements for child care centers.<sup>1</sup> The following 13 states have stand-alone school-age licensing regulations: California, Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, and Washington.<sup>2</sup>

**Definition of School-Age** – For the purpose of licensing, states define school-age children in a number of different ways. Several states define school-age children as those who are age five or older, eligible for or attending kindergarten or first grade, or meet both of these criteria. Some states include an upper age or grade limit ranging from fifth grade through age 18.<sup>3</sup>

**Common Requirements Adapted for School-Age** – States have adapted requirements in the following areas for school-age care programs:

- **Child Supervision** – Ratios and group size requirements typically vary according to the age of children served. There are a wide range of state requirements; for example, child-staff ratios for six-year olds range from 10:1 to 26:1 and group sizes range from 20 to 50.<sup>4</sup>
- **Staff Qualifications** – 28 states have specific qualifications for staff in school-age programs; for example, recognizing coursework in elementary education, recreation or other fields relevant to school-age care.<sup>5</sup>
- **Child Activities** – Afterschool Investments staff have identified at least ten states that require that programs offer developmentally appropriate activities for school-age children. For example, states require a balance of structured, unstructured, self-directed, quiet and active activities.<sup>6</sup>

Some states also have specific school-age standards focused on materials, equipment and facilities.

**Exemptions** – A number of states exempt certain types of school-age programs from licensing requirements. Common types of license-exempt programs include programs run by or based at public schools, recreation and drop-in programs, and programs operating for limited hours per day or weeks per year. Some states choose to exempt programs from only a subset of requirements; for example, school-based programs may be exempt from facilities requirements.<sup>7</sup>

For more information on this topic, see: *Promoting Quality in Afterschool Programs through State Child Care Regulations*, available online at: <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/childcareregs.pdf>

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<sup>1</sup> National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) and the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA). "The 2007 Child Care Licensing Study". NCCIC and NARA, <http://naralicensing.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=160>. The only states that do not have school-age specific requirements are Louisiana, Nevada, and Wyoming and Idaho. Data is not available for territories or tribes.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> NCCIC. "State Requirements for Child:Staff Ratios and Maximum Group Sizes for Child Care Centers in 2007." NCCIC, <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/cclicensingreq/ratios.html>

<sup>5</sup> NCCIC. "State Requirements about School-Age Care Staff Qualifications", February 2009. Research by Afterschool Investments in June 2009 identified three additional states not included in NCCIC's report. These states are: Colorado, Hawaii and North Dakota.

<sup>6</sup> Afterschool Investments. "Promoting Quality in Afterschool Programs through State Child Care Regulations." June 2006; and Afterschool Investments. "Overview of School-Age Licensing: Key Issues and Selected Examples of State School-Age Licensing Regulations", memo for Washington child care administrator, June 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid and Afterschool Investments. "State Child Care Licensing Exemptions Relevant to Afterschool Programs," March 2008.