

## How Child Care Training is Offered, Provided, Coordinated, and Approved

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) helps child care providers find, take and track the training and professional development they need to meet licensing and Parent Aware requirements and achieve their professional goals. The department does this by partnering and contracting with organizations that specialize in helping child care providers start up and improve their programs.

This set of services make up Minnesota's Child Care Professional Development System. This system was started in 2007, as a result of direction from the Minnesota Legislature, under Minnesota Session Laws 2007, Section 56. The law required that the system include coordinated delivery of training content, incentives and supports, trainer and course approval processes, and career lattice steps used to track professional development. These system components are supported by a professional development registry. This system aligns with the requirements of the federal Child Care Development Block Grant that states must provide a professional development system for child care.

### Types of Training Offered

There are two types of training offered in the system:

**State-owned training:** Training developed by the department often through contracts with individuals with content expertise and training development knowledge and skills. The department develops training courses when 1) the Minnesota Legislature requires providers take a training developed by the department to fulfill a training requirement, or 2) when the on-going process to assess training needs demonstrates a gap in available training content.

**Training owned by independent trainers and training sponsor organizations:** Training developed by approved independent trainers, training sponsor organizations or curriculum publishers. These individuals and entities create training that they offer to child care providers either independently or through an organization contracted by DHS.

Both types are eligible for approval and can be listed in the professional development registry. The registry is the tool used by providers to search for training and track their progress. In Minnesota, the registry is called [Develop](#), Minnesota's Quality Improvement and Registry Tool. Most states have professional development registries.

Both types of training can be offered online, on demand, and in-person. In person training can be offered in classrooms or through one-on-one coaching and consultation. Training is also available in multiple languages.

## How Training Is Provided

The department supports availability of child care training through contracts with partners who specialize in training for child care providers.

### DHS-contracted training delivery partners include:

- **Center for Early Education and Develop at the University of Minnesota:** provides training with an emphasis on child-adult interactions, on-site observation, and child assessment.
- **Center for Inclusive Child Care:** provides training and coaching, with an emphasis on inclusion of children with high needs, health and safety, and serving infants and toddlers.
- **Child Care Aware system:** a network state and local agencies that that provide a wide range of child care training, coaching and technical assistance, to meet licensing requirements, achieve Parent Aware Star Ratings or for ongoing professional development. Eager to Learn offers on-line courses.
- **First Children's Finance:** provides business development services through training, coaching, consultation, technical assistance and business leadership cohorts.
- **Minnesota School-Age Care Alliance:** provides training and consultation, with an emphasis on serving school-age children.

DHS-contracted partners provide both state-developed training and training developed by individual trainers or training organizations. Some provide training and coaching through their employees, and others provide it through contracts with independent trainers and coaches. Training offered by contracted partners must be approved and listed in the registry. DHS subsidizes the cost of training through these partners when the training is required or when the on-going process to assess training needs demonstrates a gap in available training content.

Training is also offered by organizations and independent trainers who voluntarily participate in Minnesota's Professional Development System. They do this by having their training and trainers approved and listed in Develop.

Child care providers can also take training outside of the state Professional Development System. This training may also meet licensing requirements depending on approval from their licensor.

## How Training Is Coordinated

DHS leads coordination of training delivery, in collaboration with DHS-contracted partners. These grantees:

- Facilitate regular meetings of partners and offer technical assistance and support;
- Recruit and support trainers;
- Plan for local training delivery, ensuring training is scheduled that meets local training needs;
- Offer customized or "tailored" training upon request;
- Support child care providers to use the registry and sign up for training
- Advise child care providers on their training and professional development goals.

Grantees also coordinate an on-going process of assessing needs for training and continuous quality improvement. This is done by collecting feedback from training participants, through an electronic provider

survey offered once per year, and by attending meetings of local associations, licensors, and partners. This information is used to develop plans that reflect local needs. On-going evaluation is also conducted to assess how training offered is meeting provider preferences and needs.

## How Training Is Approved

There are two ways in which training is approved:

**Approval through Achieve -- Minnesota Center for Professional Development (MNCPD):** This approval process ensures quality training opportunities are available for providers in Minnesota. A DHS grantee, Achieve -- MNCPD, administers a training approval process that is similar to many other states.

To receive approval for a training through Achieve—MNCPD, trainers use Develop to apply for training approval. Achieve--MNCPD reviews information submitted through Develop by curriculum writers, who describe their training, to determine if the training meets certain required standards. For example, trainers must clearly describe the level of the training, the skills and abilities the training is designed to teach consistent with the [Minnesota Knowledge and Competency Framework](#), what a provider will learn if they attend, how the training addresses diversity and inclusion, the activities and materials included in the training, and how learning will be assessed. Staff from Achieve--MNCPD review the training to ensure it meets the standards and then the training is listed in Develop as approved. This ensures that child care providers can search for approved training that meets their needs using Develop. The standards for approving training can be found on the [Achieve – Minnesota Center for Professional Development website](#).

There are also modified training approval processes for state and national partners that already have processes in place to assure training quality. DHS is currently working with Achieve--MNCPD to update the training approval process to ensure a consistent standard of quality training is delivered.

**Approval to meet requirements through Minnesota Licensing:** This approval ensures training taken by child care providers for continuing education meets statutory requirements. Licensors review training documentation to verify training taken meets requirements in statute.

To maintain their family child care license, providers must take 16 hours of continuing education each year. The law mandates that certain topics be covered on a set schedule and allows providers to fill the remainder of the hours with classes of their choosing on topics appropriate for early childhood educators. Unless the statute requires that providers take a specific training, licensors must accept trainings that have been approved for family child care providers by Achieve--MNCPD and posted on the Develop website.

Providers also have the option of taking training from sources outside of the state professional development system that Achieve--MNCPD has not approved. To have those training hours count towards their annual training requirement, providers must provide documentation to their licensor for approval. County licensors verify that the training meets the statutory requirement for content, is completed in a timely manner, and that they have covered all required content areas.