

Child Care Staffing Ratios in Connecticut and Select States

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September 16, 2022 | 2022-R-0212

Issue

In general, states that license child care centers have varying requirements for child to adult ratios based on age groups and group sizes. The child to adult ratios for youth day camps also vary from state to state.

This report lays out the child-caregiver ratios for child care providers and camps in Connecticut and select states, showing the ways in which these ratios vary from state to state based on age-bands and group sizes.

Summary

Connecticut

In Connecticut, child care centers, family day care homes, group day care homes, and youth camps are regulated by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC).

Under the law, a (1) child day care center provides care to more than 12 children, (2) family day care home provides care to six or fewer children in a private home, and (3) group day care home provides care to between seven and 12 children or meets the definition of a family day care home except that it is located in a facility other than a private home ([CGS § 19a-77](#) and [Conn. Agencies Regs. 19a-87b-2](#)).

Child Care Centers

A child care center provides care to more than 12 children, with a child to caregiver ratio of:

- 10:1 for children ages three and older and
- 4:1 for children under age three ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(1\)](#) and [Conn. Agencies Regs 19a-79-10\(c\)](#)).

Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home provides care to six or fewer children in a private home, with a child to caregiver ratio of 6:1 for (1) children less than school age (with no more than two children under 18 months old) and (2) three school-age children.

During the school year, family day care providers may have up to three additional school-age children, including the provider's own children, attending school full time who receive less than three hours of before- or after-school care. The provider's own school-age children under age 12 count toward the three-child limit. However, if the provider employs an OEC-approved assistant or substitute, the provider may care for up to nine children, even if none of the children attend school full-time ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(3\)](#), as amended by [PA 22-81, § 7](#)).

During the summer when school is not in session, a family day care provider generally cannot care for more than six children. School-age children who are on summer vacation get counted towards the six full-time slots. Three additional school-age children are permitted if there is an OEC approved staff member present to assist the provider. If the provider has more than three children, they are all permitted, and the assistant is not required if all the school-age children are the provider's own children ([CGS § 19a-77\(a\)\(3\)](#) and [Conn. Agencies Regs. § 19a-87b-5\(d\)\(1\)\(b\)](#)).

Youth Camps

In Connecticut, resident youth camps must maintain a camper to staff ratio of 6:1 for children less than age eight and 8:1 for campers aged eight and older, and staff must be at least 16 years of age or older. Day camps must maintain a ratio of 9:1 for campers less than age six and 12:1 for children aged six or older. These ratios must be maintained at all times, including during camp trips and outings. Children must be at least age three to attend a licensed camp. By law, the OEC commissioner must adopt regulations on camper to staff ratios ([CGS § 19a-428](#) and [Conn. Agencies Regs. § 19a-428-2\(n\)](#)).

Other Select States

California

Child Care Centers. In California, child care center child ratios are determined by the funding the center receives. However, all child care programs must meet California Health and Safety Code regulations (Cal. Code tit. 22, §§ [101216.3](#) & [101216.4](#)). State subsidized child care centers must also meet Education Code regulations ([Cal. Educ. Code tit. 5, § 18290](#)). Table 1 below lists the ratios for these facilities under California law.

Table 1: Child to Adult Ratios in California Child Care Centers

Community Care Licensing Division (Title 22)		Department of Education- Early Education and Support Division (Title 5)	
Age-Band	Child to Adult Ratio	Age-Band	Child to Adult Ratio
Infants (under age 2)	4:1	Infants (birth to 18 months)	4:1
Toddlers	6:1	Toddlers (18 to 36 months)	6:1
Preschool (2-6 years)	12:1	Preschool (36 months to kindergarten)	8:1

Youth Camps. California law does not specify child to adult ratios for youth camps. However, recent [legislation](#) (2022 session) aims to create oversight for day camps by requiring the California State Department of Social Services to provide recommendations to the legislature regarding developing and issuing requirements for the regulatory oversight of children's camps.

Colorado

Child Care Centers. Table 2 lists the child to staff ratios that child care facilities must adhere to in order to obtain and maintain licensure in the state of Colorado ([12 Colo. Code Regs. § 2509-8-7.702.46\(A\)\(12\)](#)):

Table 2: Child to Adult Ratios in Colorado Child Care Centers

Age-Band	Child to Adult Ratio
6 weeks to 18 months	5:1
12 to 36 months	5:1
24 to 36 months	7:1
2.5 years to 3 years	8:1
3 to 4 years	10:1

Table 2 (continued)

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>
4 to 5 years	12:1
5 years and older	15:1
Mixed age group 2.5 to 6 years	10:1

Youth Camps. Table 3 lists the child to adult ratios for day camps, summer camps, summer playground programs, and before and after school programs ([12 Colo. Code Regs. § 2509-8-7.712.43\(F\)](#)).

Table 3: Child to Adult Ratios in Colorado Youth Camps

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>	<i>Maximum Group Size</i>
Mixed age group including 4-year-olds	12:1	24
5 years and older	15:1	30

Florida

Child Care Centers. Florida child care facility licensing standards must be met regardless of the sources of the fees used to operate the facility or the type of children served by the facility ([Fla. Stat. Ann. § 402.35\(4\)\(a\)](#)). These ratios are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Child to Adult Ratios in Florida Child Care Centers

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>
0-12 months	4:1
Older than 1 year and under age 2	6:1
2 years or older but under age 3	11:1
3 years or older but under age 4	15:1
4 years or older but under age 5	20:1

Summer Day Camps. Under Florida law, summer day camps are excluded from the definition of "child care facilities" and therefore exempt from certain licensing requirements applicable to those facilities ([Fla. Stat. Ann. § 402.302\(2\)](#)).

Maine

Child Care Facilities. As shown in Tables 5 and 6 below, the child to adult ratio requirements for child care facilities in Maine depend on the total number of children the facility serves ([Code Me. R. 10-148, Ch. 32, § 7](#)).

Table 5: Child to Adult Ratios for Maine Child Care Centers Serving 12 or Less Children

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>		
6 weeks to 2 years	4:1	8:2	12:3
2 to 5 years	8:1	12:2	N/A
Over 5 years	12:1	N/A	N/A
Mixed ages	1 staff: 3 children under age 2 + 3 children ages 2-5 + 2 children over age 5 or 8 children ages 2-5 + 2 children over age 5	2 staff: 6 children under age 2 + 6 children over 2 years	3 staff: 12 children (Maximum of nine children may be under age 2)

Table 6: Child to Adult Ratios for Maine Child Care Centers Serving 13 or More Children

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>	<i>Maximum group size</i>
6 weeks to 1 year	4:1	8
1 year to 2.5 years	4:1	12
	5:1	10
2.5 years to 3.5 years	7:1	21
3 years to 5 years	8:1	24
	10:1	20
5 years (school age) to 12 years	10:1	n/a

Youth Camps. The Department of Health and Human Services licenses Maine youth day camps and requires them to adhere to the following ratios of adults to children ([Code Me. R. 10-144, Ch. 208, § 6](#)):

Table 7: Child to Adult Ratios for Maine Youth Day Camps

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>
6 years and under	5:1
7-8 years	6:1
9-14 years	8:1

Table 7 (continued)

<i>Age-Band</i>	<i>Child to Adult Ratio</i>
15-18 years	10:1
19 years and over	20:1

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