



Key Message

In many cases, Defense Department-certified military family child care providers must also be licensed or registered by the state when simply caring for DOD children. By recognizing military family child care certification, in lieu of requiring state licensing, states can enhance access to military child care and reduce the time on waitlists. States can also support Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood-PLUS, which increases access for active-duty, National Guard and reserve families.

Discussion Points

1. Family child care workers provide military families with reliable and personalized care in a homelike setting, on and off installations. These providers, the majority of whom are military spouses (87% in fiscal year 2021), operate as independent business owners, contributing to the financial stability of their families.
2. When moving with their service member, family child care providers do not have to complete additional training or an additional background check when they arrive at their new installation, unless their certification is due for a renewal. The new installation commander grants providers certification upon completion of the required home inspections.
3. States, however, require licensure or registration for some on-installation and all off-installation family child care providers – which is duplicative of the military service certification process. This can delay a provider from issuing child care, which can create financial hardship for a military spouse who needs to reestablish a business after a military move.
4. By exempting family child care providers already certified through the military service process, states enhance the quality of life and economic security of both the providers and military families seeking qualified child care options.
5. Installation family child care programs manage the military service certification of family child care providers in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 6060.02, "Child Development Programs." Additional information can be found at <https://militarychildcare.com>.
6. The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood-PLUS program expands the DOD's fee assistance program to include community child care providers who meet a state's Quality Rating and Improvement System. States can work with the department to ensure the program is fully implemented. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/child-care/mccyn-plus-child-care-program>.



According to a recent report, the Defense Department was in need of 1,433 family child care providers to meet the demands of military communities. But in fiscal year 2021, the department reported having only 727 available providers, an almost 50% deficit.