



DUAL LICENSE PILOT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Executive Summary

This progress report is prepared to comply with [HB 2619](#) § 7, which directed the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to establish a pilot project to create a dual license, allowing individuals to receive a combined foster care and child care license. This report addresses the agency's progress in planning, recruiting, onboarding, and coaching dual license holders. A final report is due to the Legislature on Nov. 1, 2023.

Status

The dual licensing pilot project began on July 1, 2020. The project manager was hired in September 2020. DCYF began recruiting participants in mid-December 2020 and onboarding participants in January 2021. Already, licensed child care and foster care providers were highly interested in the pilot, and many wanted to participate. Currently, 13 providers are at varying stages in the pilot process. DCYF anticipates having 20 participants fully enrolled by fall 2021.

Cost

\$250,000 was appropriated by the Legislature for DCYF to conduct this pilot project. As of March 1, 2021, \$60,255.85 was used for one FTE to manage the project. Additionally, \$658.84 was spent translating recruitment materials into Spanish and Somali to ensure non-English speaking providers were informed of the participation opportunities.

Introduction

Historically, children in state custody have not had equal access to high-quality child care. Additionally, family home child care providers desiring to become foster parents reported significant barriers which limited their ability to have children in state custody placed in their care. The dual licensing pilot will assess the feasibility and ease for individuals to receive a combined foster care and child care license. This pilot project will also explore the effects of foster care placement and the correlation of child care availability specific to foster children while evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of a dual-purpose oversight system. The long-term goal of dual licensure is to increase child care accessibility by identifying and addressing systemic obstacles to licensed child care in areas where child care has been identified as a barrier for foster care placement.

Planning

Pilot planning began in summer 2020 with the hiring of a project manager and concluded in October 2020. Two workgroups spent two months exploring and comparing policy and practice between foster care and family home child care.¹ Each workgroup was inclusive of both internal and external stakeholders and partners (see Appendix A). Four specific deliverables were identified for the pilot:

- Provide multiple avenues for collaboration with the provider community to ensure holistic input and nurturing partnerships.
- Develop a set of pilot Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requirements for dual licensure.
- Streamline onboarding process inclusive of orientation, application, and training requirements for ease of access and ensuring reliable data collection.
- Make recommendations for programmatic structure and field practices.

¹ Participation was limited to family home child care providers. Center providers do not operate within the family residence, providing a clear separation of licensing regulations and making a dual license easier to maintain.

Outcomes of the workgroups and pre-pilot planning included reviewing WAC and developing pilot procedures to guide the field work. Analysis of the WAC concluded that while HB 2619 authorized DCYF to create a pilot set of rules, it was unnecessary as there were no regulations that directly contradicted the other. Likewise, it was also determined that issuing a single license containing full child care and foster care services was not feasible at the time because:

- Federal requirements strictly state that no one foster care provider can be held to a different standard in order to receive foster care funding.²
- Information and case management IT systems between foster care and child care do not align nor communicate with one another.
- There are no staff specifically trained or designated in both systems and regulations to provide unified license oversight and support.

To assess and address these constraints, the dual license pilot is collecting additional narrative information from pilot participants and other stakeholder groups regarding existing barriers to provide recommendations within the final report on how to eliminate or mitigate some of the above barriers.

Four initial specific participation guidelines were put into place to limit the highest risk scenarios affecting the safety and stability of child placement and other children in care (see Appendix B).

Recruitment and Participation

Recruitment began in December 2020. The DCYF Office of Communications emailed a one-page introduction to the pilot project in English, Spanish, and Somali to state licensed foster care homes and licensed family home child care providers. Additionally, information was provided to advisory groups such as the foster parent advisory board, Foster Parents Associations of Washington State (FPAWS), and the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC). Due to limited resources inclusive of FTE and IT limitations, pilot participation was limited to no more than 20 dual-licensed participants. To date, 71 providers from across the state have expressed interest in participating.

Table 1 describes participation levels as of July 12, 2021. Six providers are dually licensed, and seven more are currently in process (pending application and in-process), with an additional four still considering participation (pending consent) and three (waitlisted) who want to participate but need to wait for personal reasons. Finally, since the pilot's inception, 11 providers enrolled in the program but withdrew, with the majority citing a need to concentrate on the license they currently hold or for children they are currently providing services.

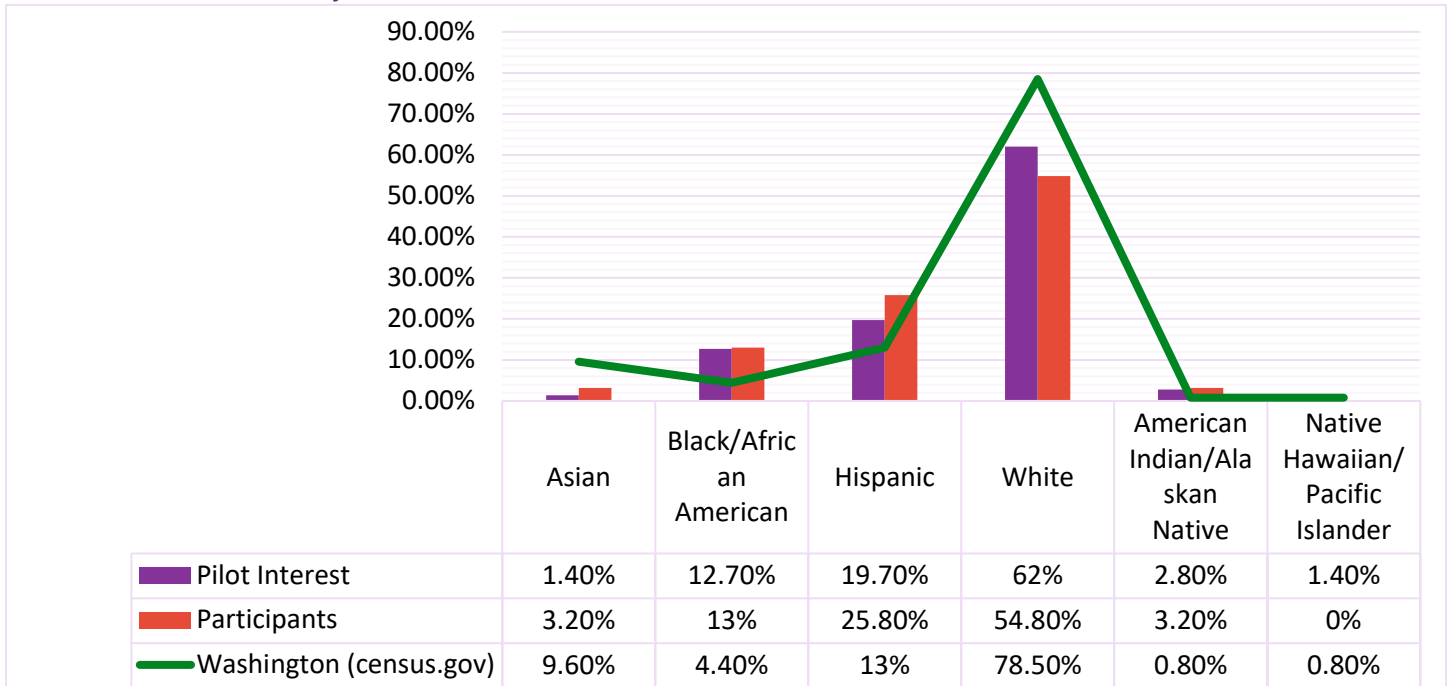
Table 1: Participation Status

Primary License	Dual License	Pending Consent	Pending Application	In-Process	Waiting List	Withdrawn	Total
Child Care	5	2	2	2	1	7	19
Foster Care	1	2	2	1	2	4	12
Total	6	4	4	3	3	11	31

² Title IV-E, Section 471 (a)(10): ...standards must be applied uniformly to all foster family homes and childcare institutions that provide foster care. The only exception to this requirement is that the governing licensing agency may waive certain non-safety standards in relative foster family homes for children in their care, on a case-by-case basis. [See ACYF-CB-PI-CB-10-11.]

Race identification data were collected to consider and assess equity and social justice impacts within this pilot. Table 2 describes the percentage variations of the racial identification of those who expressed interest in pilot participation (71 total) to those that continued to participate (31 total) in comparison to that of the general Washington State population. Overall, the participation involvement is fairly representative of the racial demographics of Washington State, with two ethnic groups slightly under-represented (white and Asian). As the pilot progresses, additional assessment comparing licensing outcomes to racial identifiers will be assessed for equity within the oversight process itself.

Table 2: Pilot Racial Identification



Ongoing

Several significant barriers were identified during the planning of the dual license pilot. A few of those addressed within the pilot include:

1. Eliminating the child care capacity restriction when holding a dual license.³
2. Providing child care subsidy payment through DCYF for foster children living in the home and enrolled in the licensed child care.
3. Reducing duplication of background checks and training requirements for providers.

While these measures have been put into place for the pilot, there will need to be permanent changes made when dual licensing is fully implemented.

Likewise, two identified significant considerations fall outside the resources of the pilot and are being addressed with temporary measures but will require additional resources if fully implemented:

- **Translation of Practice/Provider Support:** Differences in licensing and service practices across child care and foster care are currently being addressed and supported through project management. While DCYF Licensing Division dedicated specific child care and foster care staff to work on and collaborate

³ WAC 110-148-1330 (2)(b): The total number of children allowed in your home will not be higher than CA's maximum capacity. All licensing agencies must be in agreement.

during the project, there is still a great deal of clarification needed for both providers and licensing staff. At this time, with the small participant population, the project manager is providing the liaison role, which will not be sustainable upon the conclusion of the pilot – especially if and when all foster care providers (including CPA-licensed and tribal-licensed) become eligible under the new system for dual licensure. The pilot will continue to consider staffing structure and resources needed post-pilot to sustain the coordination necessary to adequately support and provide oversight to dually licensed providers.

- **Information Technology Systems and Data Integrity:** Another struggle for the pilot is that the child care and foster care licensing data live in two different IT systems. The workload on staff to continuously move between systems and provider information while ensuring data integrity remains intact is significantly higher for dually licensed programs and those in the process of obtaining the second license.

Conclusion

It is anticipated that by the end of 2021, there will be 20 fully dually licensed providers across the state. The second year of the pilot will involve continued data collection, including monthly interviews, licensing oversight (child care and foster care), maintenance data, observer group input, and continued program evaluation activities including, but not limited to, continued coordination with DCYF impacted services and the oversight committee. All qualitative and quantitative data collection will be used to provide final dual-licensed recommendations.

Appendix A: Pilot Workgroup Attendees

Policy/Financial Workgroup (Recommendations)

- Ann Radcliffe (DCYF Policy/Change Management)
- Casandra Howard (DCYF Child Care Licensor)
- Eva Freimuth (DCYF Forms)
- Hung Tang (DCYF Foster Care Federal Funding)
- Jeanine Tacchini (DCYF Foster Care Deputy Administrator)
- Joseph Rissone (DCYF LD CPS/SAM CQI)
- Judy Bunkelman (DCYF Child Care Deputy Administrator)
- Matt Judge (DCYF CCDF Administrator)
- Meghan Reichard (DCYF CPS/SAM)
- Melissa Sayer (DCYF LD/CPS Supervisor)
- Michelle Giard (DCYF Project Manager)
- Mike Canfield (External, FPAWS)
- Molly McAllister (DCYF IV-E Training and Policy Manager)
- Rachel Hay (DCYF Child Care Supervisor)
- Reagan Henry (DCYF Tribal Liaison)
- Robert Ensley (DCYF Manager of Federal Funding)
- Shane Wherry (DCYF Foster Care Area Administrator)
- Sonya Stevens (DCYF LD Research)
- Tracy Freckleton (External, FPAWS)
- Tyler Farmer (DCYF Policy Manager)

Practice/Structure Workgroup (Recommendations)

- Amber Salzer (DCYF Foster Care CQI)
- Brett Skinner (DCYF Policy/Change Management)
- Cammey Rocco (DCYF Child Care Area Administrator)
- Casandra Howard (DCYF Child Care Licensor)
- Daniel Blevins (DCYF WA Compass Business Analyst)

- Darwin Bleth (DCYF Regional Licensor)
- Eduardo Camacho (DCYF Child Care Licensor)
- Guadalupe Magallen (External, Child Care provider/SEIU)
- Karen Christensen (DCYF Child Care CQI)
- Kirsten Weigand (DCYF WA Compass)
- Kristina Johnson (External, 1624 Representative)
- Margarite Hatter (DCYF CPS/SAM)
- Mark Niskanen (DCYF Foster Care Supervisor)
- Matt Kirsch (DCYF FamLink)
- Meaghan Thompson (DCYF WA Compass Project Manager)
- Rebecca Taylor (DCYF LD CQI Supervisor)
- Rixa Evershed (External, Child Care Provider)
- Shane Wherry (DCYF Foster Care Area Administrator)
- Sonya Stevens (DCYF LD Research/Project Owner)
- Michelle Giard (DCYF Project Manager)

Executive Oversight Committee (Final Decisions)

- Luba Bezborodnikova (DCYF Assistant secretary of Licensing/Executive Sponsor)
- Pam McKeown (DCYF Senior Foster Care Administrator)
- Travis Hansen (DCYF Statewide Child Care Licensing Administrator)
- Ron Effland (DCYF Senior Administrator LD CPS/SAM)
- Nicolas Harris (DCYF Licensing Division Data Systems Supervisor)
- Tyler Farmer (DCYF Policy Manager)
- Sonya Stevens (DCYF Research and Project Owner)
- Michelle Giard (DCYF Project Manager)

Appendix B: Pilot Overview and Scope

Available online in English, Spanish, and Somali.

Dual License Pilot Project Overview



The Project

The Dual License Pilot Project is creating a streamlined process that supports individuals in becoming dually licensed by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) in both foster care and child care.

The Purpose

- To develop systems and policies that will increase accessibility for individuals to receive a combined foster care and child care license.
- To increase accessibility of child care in areas where child care has been identified as a barrier for foster care placement.

The Scope

- State licensed foster care family homes and state licensed family home child care.
- Licensee must already hold one license (foster care or family home child care) in good standing for minimum of one year.
- Licensee must be 21 years of age and older.
- Foster care placement of children not to exceed six children.
- Foster care placement to exclude placement of children receiving Behavioral Rehabilitation Services while in the pilot. If rated for Behavioral Rehabilitation Services while in placement, the dual license team will evaluate continued pilot participation.
- Foster care placement to exclude placement of children with a rate assessment of level four, if known at placement. If the rate assessment is raised to level four while in placement, the dual license team will evaluate continued pilot participation.

- Child care license not to exceed 12 children.
- Child care hours to not exceed the hours of 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. to allow for sufficient family time. Exceptions may be granted on an individual basis. Not to include overnight care.
- There will be a cap of 20 dually licensed participants during the duration of the pilot.

The Team

DCYF has an enthusiastic team working together, which includes: research manager, program manager, 1 foster care supervisor, 1 child care supervisor, 1 foster care licenser and 3 child care licensers.

The Future

The project is expected to end June 2022 and we will be presenting recommendations to the Washington State Legislature based on what we learn throughout the pilot.

The Ask

If you are aware of family home foster care or family home child care licensees who are interested in becoming a Dual License participant, please direct them to the appropriate orientation to get a head start on the process. We hope to begin recruiting Dual License providers in mid-December 2020.

For more information please email

michelle.giard@dcyf.wa.gov

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