



BRIGHT FROM THE START
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, Suite 754, East Tower, Atlanta, Georgia 30334
(404) 657-5562

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

Bobby D. Cagle, MSW
COMMISSIONER

January 15, 2014

Dear Child Care Provider:

On December 1, 2012 the new credential requirements for directors and lead teachers became effective. After the new credential rules became effective, DECAL designated a technical assistance time period from December 1, 2012 to December 1, 2013 to support providers in meeting the new credential requirements. During the technical assistance time period, DECAL issued no citations for directors and lead teachers who did not meet the rule requirements. DECAL licensing consultants and child care programs jointly developed improvement plans for staff enrolled in a credential program and those seeking enrollment into a credential program. **In upcoming visits, child care consultants will confirm your program's status in meeting the rule and fulfilling improvement plans.**

NOTE: This requirement does not apply to assistant directors, assistant teachers, cooks, bus drivers, or people providing indirect care to children. School age only programs are required to have at least one staff member on-site at all times who meets the education credential requirements. Group Day Care Homes are required to have at least one administrator/director on-site at all times who meets the education and qualifying child care experience requirements. This rule is found in *Rules for Child Care Learning Centers* 591-1-1.31(1) and 591-1-1-.31(2) and in *Rules for Group Day Care Homes* 290-2-1-.09(b)9.

SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES are available to help early childhood professionals obtain a credential. For more information, go to:
<http://www.caresolutions.com>

VARIANCE APPLICATIONS: An application for a variance may be submitted for a lead teacher employed with the child care program before December 1, 2012, and who has seven (7) or more years of continuous experience teaching in a licensed child care program(s) and who meets licensing training requirements for the current year. **The deadline to apply for a lead teacher credential variance is July 1, 2014.** To obtain the credential variance application, go to: <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/StaffCredentialVarianceApplication.pdf>

For additional information regarding director and lead teacher credentials, visit the DECAL website at www.dec.al.ga.gov or contact your licensing consultant or the Bright from the Start office at 404-657-5562.

Thank you,

Kristie Lewis
Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services

Keith D. Bostick, LCSW
Deputy Commissioner for Programs