

H.208: An act relating to child care and early childhood education

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Counsel

***** AGENCY OF EDUCATION STRUCTURE AND PREKINDERGARTEN *****

Secs. 1-11:

- Establishes a second Deputy Secretary position w/in AOE
- Replaces universal prekindergarten program with public prekindergarten education program beginning in FY25 for children 4 year of age, including an option for private prekindergarten under contract with the home district when the home district does not have an elementary school or prekindergarten program and the district with which the home district seeks to contract with lacks capacity or is more than 20 miles away from the child’s residence
- Conforming changes throughout V.S.A.
- Requires AOE and DCF, in consultation with BBF, to amend rules to reflect programmatic prekindergarten changes

***** PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION; PROPERTY USED BY A CHILD CARE PROVIDER *****

Secs. 12-14:

- Establishes a property tax exemption for property used to provide child care services

***** DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES RESTRUCTURE AND CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT *****

Secs. 15-68:

- Divides the DCF into two separate departments, DCF and the Department of Economic Empowerment (DEE) as provided below:

Department for Children and Families	Department of Economic Empowerment
Child Development Division (Child Care Licensing, Child Care Financial Assistance Program)	Economic Services Division (Reach Up, General Assistance)
Children with Special Health Needs	Disability Determination Services
Family Services Division (Foster Care, CHINS)	Office of Economic Opportunity
Maternal and Child Health (currently in VDH)	Office of Child Support

- Reorganizes DCF and establishes DEE
- Makes conforming changes throughout the V.S.A. to align each statutory responsibility to the appropriate department
- Requires transfer of rulemaking authority between DCF, DEE, and VDH

* * * CHILD CARE AND CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES * * *

Secs. 69-81:

- Expands CCFAP eligibility in FY24 and FY25
- Creates a tiered professional compensation standard for child care workforce in FY25
- Adopts a total cost of care model within CCFAP in FY25
- Prohibits child care waitlist and application fees for children eligible for CCFAP
- Establishes a noncitizen child care assistance program
- Provides child care workforce retention grants
- Removes sunset on scholarships for prospective early childhood providers

* * * EFFECTIVE DATES * * *

Sec. 82:

- Outlines multiple effective dates