

Date of Hearing: May 18, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Chris Holden, Chair

AB 2131 (Mullin) – As Amended April 25, 2022

Policy Committee:	Human Services	Vote:	8 - 0
	Education		7 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill authorizes the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to implement the single childcare license through written communications to the field prior to the adoption of the necessary regulations. As of January 1, 2024, repeals provisions for an optional toddler program within the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) or other childcare programs. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Authorizes CDSS to implement and administer the single childcare license through all-county letters or similar written instructions until the necessary regulations are adopted, and repeals the authorization for CDSS to adopt emergency regulations for this purpose.
- 2) Repeals provisions for an optional toddler program for children between 18 months to three years of age within the CSPP, or other childcare program serving infants, as of January 1, 2024, to clarify that the existing single childcare license applies to programs serving infant, toddler, preschool and schoolage children.

FISCAL EFFECT:

CDSS estimates ongoing General Fund costs of \$150,000 to \$200,000, annually for one staff position to develop written instructions and revise regulations for the single childcare license, coordinate with stakeholders, assist with implementation, analyze program implementation results and prepare recommendations for improvements.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Child care has always been an integral part of California's economy and further streamlining that system for parents and providers is a win for the state. The approaching implementation of AB 605, (Mullin, 2018) modernizes the child care licensing system in California by creating a single license and negates the need for language regarding the "toddler option" in statute. [This bill] resolves this issue while providing the California Department of Social Services the flexibility to fully implement the single-license program through an all-county letter.

- 2) **Background.** Existing law and regulations dictate that infant care centers serve children under two years old, preschool childcare centers serve children between the ages of two years

old and when they start school, and school-age childcare centers serve children who have entered the first grade or are in a childcare program exclusively for children in kindergarten and above. A “combination center” is any combination of an infant center, preschool childcare center, school-age childcare center and childcare center for mildly ill children that is owned and operated by one licensee at a common address. In California, separate licenses are required for serving infant preschool, and school age children. Thus, owners and operators of combination centers serving more than one population must get multiple licenses and undergo separate inspection and compliance processes for each license.

AB 605 (Mullin), Chapter 574, Statutes of 2018, required CDSS to promulgate regulations to create a new infant to school-age childcare center license with all respective health and safety requirements for the age groups served. This single childcare center license allows licensed providers to obtain one license and select which age group or groups they wish to serve. A single license promotes greater continuity of care for children and parents being served in childcare centers and supports an ongoing relationship between parents, children and their care providers. All daycare centers are required to be licensed as childcare centers by January 1, 2024.

This bill removes outdated language regarding the optional toddler program given the requirement to implement a single license for childcare providers by January 1, 2024. The bill also deletes the authorization for CDSS to adopt emergency regulations to administer the single license requirement, and instead authorizes CDSS to do so via all-county letters or similar written instructions until regulations are adopted.

Analysis Prepared by: Jennifer Swenson / APPR. / (916) 319-2081