

WAC

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What are the regulations regarding discrimination?

- Child care centers are defined by state and federal law as places of public accommodation and must not discriminate in employment practices and client services on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, religion, or disability.
- You must:
 - Post a nondiscrimination poster where families and staff can easily read it
 - Have a written nondiscrimination policy, and
 - Comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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Respecting individual rights and personal beliefs**Non-Discrimination**

Chapter 49.60 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) describes the rules and procedures for the state Human Rights Commission. In part, it states: “The right to be free from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation (including gender identity), or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a disabled person is recognized as and declared to be a civil right. This right shall include, but not be limited to: (a) The right to obtain and hold employment without discrimination; (b) The right to the full enjoyment of any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, or privileges of any place of public resort, accommodation, assemblage, or amusement.”

This applies to child care centers. Contact your licensor for a copy of the Department of Early Learning Non-Discrimination poster.

Children with Special Needs

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law, enacted in 1990, that guarantees that children with disabilities cannot be excluded from “public accommodations” simply because of a disability. “Public accommodations” include child care programs. The law requires all centers to make reasonable efforts to:

- ◆ Serve disabled children
- ◆ Care for children with special needs in the main group, and
- ◆ Provide training resources for staff.

You cannot deny a child a place in your center because of a sensory, mental or physical disability if the center has equipment and staff to meet the child’s needs. In practice, staff skills may need to be higher, staff to child ratios may need to be lower and program supervision may need to be greater when you enroll children with special needs. All the children in your program, however, will benefit from including children with special needs. Inclusion contributes to acceptance, improved socialization, and understanding of individual differences.

The importance you place on treating all people fairly sets an example for the children in your care. What you say, the way you say it, the way you act and even your choice of books and other materials can encourage children to think positively about themselves and other people.

Note: You must include your center’s non-discrimination policy in the parent handbook you give to parents when they enroll their child.

An example of a Non-Discrimination Policy is included on the next page for you to use as you set up your policy.