

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Governor

WHEREAS, Nonparental care that children receive outside of their homes is supplementary care that enhances the children's growth and development;

WHEREAS, When a parent gives a child over to another for supplementary care, risks arise which need to be offset by reasonable protective measures;

WHEREAS, The demand for adequate child care among working families and businesses is growing, especially for infants, school age children, and children with special needs;

WHEREAS, Regardless of the child care facility or program, children have common needs for a safe and healthy environment, adequate physical facilities and equipment, and competent caregivers;

WHEREAS, Maryland's existing child care licensing system and the regulations applicable to the various categories of facilities have been developed without consistency; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the State and its citizens to establish a single consolidated licensing system for nonresidential child care facilities currently known as family day care homes, group day care centers, nonpublic nursery schools, and nonpublic kindergartens; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Family Law

[Subtitle 1. Children.]

[Part I. In General.]

PART VII. CHILD CARE CENTERS

[14-101.] 5-570.

(a) In this PART VII OF THIS subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(b) "Child" means an individual under the age of 16 years.

(c) (1) "[Group day] CHILD care center" means an agency, institution, or establishment that, for part or all of a day, or on a 24-hour basis on a regular schedule, and at least twice a week, offers or provides [group day] CHILD care to children who do not have the same parentage except as otherwise provided for in law or regulation.