

“Three-Hour Rule” Maintained:

Illinois DCFS Department of Licensing recognizes that there has been a lot of confusion as it relates to the “three-hour rule” involving day care assistants being left unsupervised in the classroom, which includes the care of children under 24-months of age. The safety and well-being of children remains the primary interest of DCFS. This intention has never once changed throughout the course of our discussions over these months. It is the mission of DCFS to keep children safe, including the safety of those infants and toddlers which is of utmost importance. DCFS has worked diligently with stakeholders and despite objections the permanent rule will take effect October 30, 2023, and there will be no gap between the current Emergency Rule expiring and the Permanent Rule taking effect. The permanent rule allows early childhood assistants who work with children under 24-months of age to be responsible for these children, unsupervised, for up to three hours without the presence of an early childhood teacher as long as the early childhood assistants meet criteria specified in the permanent rule.

