



# CHILD CARE FACILITATOR: Roles and Responsibilities



If your community is serious about increasing child care options and making it easier for child care providers to open or expand a facility, creating a municipal child care facilitator position could be a solution. A child care facilitator would serve as the main contact for all child care-related activities in your community. Having a designated individual or department in this role ensures that child care opportunities are not overlooked and that access to necessary child care resources is readily available.

The ideal candidate might already be working for your community in the planning department, the city manager's office, or in the building or community and economic development office. It might be housed in an outside organization like a chamber of commerce. In smaller communities, it might be more practical to share a staff member with a neighboring community; as child care is a regional issue. Partnering with regional child care coalitions—and designating one of their staff members to act as the facilitator—is another option, which could provide more buy in, increase knowledge across sectors, and expand the reach of the initiative. This role is a new concept, and has not been traditionally defined, so opportunities for flexibility and creative solutions are endless.

## **DOES YOUR COMMUNITY HAVE A CHILD CARE FACILITATOR?**

This quick sheet outlines the roles and responsibilities of a child care facilitator, so that your community can determine a good fit for the position.



## FACILITATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Child care facilitators advocate for both prospective and existing child care businesses in the community. Facilitators provide information about how to find a suitable location, local and state laws that must be followed, and any funding or incentives that may be available for child care businesses. They are the subject matter experts in how to successfully open a child care business.

### Key tasks/roles of a child care facilitator:

- Helps both existing and prospective child care business owners navigate regulations and the approval process.
- Learns continuously from state, regional, and local agencies and governments on child care business regulations and opportunities
- Provides resources to prospective and existing child care business owners, local government staff, and the community at large regarding changes in child care regulations and funding opportunities.
- Makes referrals and follows through until issues or problems are resolved.
- Promotes communication among child care business owners, other business owners in the community, and local government.
- Collaborates with child care business owners to resolve issues.
- Brings together child care business owners, other business owners in the community, state, regional, and local government, to arrive at solutions.

### EXISTING MUNICIPAL STAFF POSITIONS THAT MAY BE AN IDEAL FIT FOR THE POSITION:

- Planning
- Community and economic development
- Building
- City manager or administrator
- Downtown development authority
- Communications
- Chamber of Commerce

- Gathers pertinent information from many sources in order to engage in a well-defined problem-solving process.
- Engages in advocacy at the local, regional, and state level on behalf of child care businesses.

Both new and established child care business owners don't always know what kind of information they need, where to find it, or how to get started. A child care facilitator is a person to turn to for answers. They provide the information and tools needed to help support a child care business' success and, ultimately, economic growth.



## FACILITATOR POSSIBILITIES

Child care businesses are licensed through State of Michigan, but also likely require municipal approvals, particularly for new construction. This makes it impossible to have a “one stop shop” for licensing and approval, but a facilitator can smooth out that process. An internal municipal professional may already have a working understanding of local zoning and building permit processes and timelines, and also may be knowledgeable — or trainable! — about small business grants available through the DDA and can become knowledgeable about state grants for small businesses and child care.

Local units of government may find it is more impactful and more cost efficient to have a child care facilitator

with a regional jurisdiction, such as a county or a portion of a county since child care services are used by both residents and employees (people who may not reside in a given community but work there). Since many employees don’t often live in the same community that they directly work in, having a regional perspective is a very important quality.

Local units of government can create a shared position or provide funding for an existing position with expanded child care related responsibilities, through a joint government agreement or contract with an agency to provide this service.

## PROMOTING A CHILD CARE FACILITATOR

Regardless of where the child care facilitator position is housed in your community’s administration, it is crucial that this resource is widely broadcast. A dedicated web page with resources and contacts is an important element of information sharing, but building inspectors, zoning administrators, and others who are often the first contact for a would-be business owner must be informed about the child care facilitator.

It is crucial that potential and existing child care business owners maintain connection with the facilitator. In order to achieve this, municipal staff must also be able to articulate how collaboration with the child care facilitator can benefit all business owners in the community.