

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

S.F. No. 5295

(SENATE AUTHORS: HAUSCHILD)

DATE
04/04/2024

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Introduction and first reading
Referred to Health and Human Services

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to child care licensing; allowing variances to licensed capacity; amending
1.3 Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 245A.04, subdivision 9.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 245A.04, subdivision 9, is amended to read:

1.6 Subd. 9. **Variances.** (a) The commissioner may grant variances to rules that do not affect
1.7 the health or safety of persons in a licensed program if the following conditions are met:

1.8 (1) the variance must be requested by an applicant or license holder on a form and in a
1.9 manner prescribed by the commissioner;

1.10 (2) the request for a variance must include the reasons that the applicant or license holder
1.11 cannot comply with a requirement as stated in the rule and the alternative equivalent measures
1.12 that the applicant or license holder will follow to comply with the intent of the rule; and

1.13 (3) the request must state the period of time for which the variance is requested.

1.14 The commissioner may grant a permanent variance when conditions under which the
1.15 variance is requested do not affect the health or safety of persons being served by the licensed
1.16 program, nor compromise the qualifications of staff to provide services. The permanent
1.17 variance shall expire as soon as the conditions that warranted the variance are modified in
1.18 any way. Any applicant or license holder must inform the commissioner of any changes or
1.19 modifications that have occurred in the conditions that warranted the permanent variance.
1.20 Failure to advise the commissioner shall result in revocation of the permanent variance and
1.21 may be cause for other sanctions under sections 245A.06 and 245A.07.

2.1 The commissioner's decision to grant or deny a variance request is final and not subject
2.2 to appeal under the provisions of chapter 14.

2.3 (b) The commissioner shall consider variances for child care center staff qualification
2.4 requirements under Minnesota Rules, parts 9503.0032 and 9503.0033, that do not affect
2.5 the health and safety of children served by the center. A variance request must be submitted
2.6 to the commissioner in accordance with paragraph (a) and must include a plan for the staff
2.7 person to gain additional experience, education, or training, as requested by the commissioner.
2.8 When reviewing a variance request under this section, the commissioner shall consider the
2.9 staff person's level of professional development, including but not limited to steps completed
2.10 on the Minnesota career lattice.

2.11 (c) The commissioner shall consider a variance for a child care center's licensed capacity
2.12 limit if the center's indoor space is within 100 square feet of what would be required for
2.13 maximum enrollment in the center based on the center's number and qualifications of staff.
2.14 A variance request must be submitted to the commissioner in accordance with paragraph
2.15 (a).

2.16 ~~(e)~~ (d) Beginning January 1, 2021, counties shall use a uniform application form
2.17 developed by the commissioner for variance requests by family child care license holders.