

Appendix A. TRLECE Recruitment Email and Call Scripts for Licensing State Administrator

Introductory recruitment email for licensing administrator

Notes:

1. *This email will be the first email that we send to administrators as a part of the recruitment process.*
2. *Attach letter from the Office of Child Care describing the importance of the work and encouraging participation.*

Subject: Invitation to inform ACF's licensing research and resources for licensing staff

Dear [CHILD CARE LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR NAME]:

Child Trends and ICF would like to invite you to participate in a phone interview about your child care licensing system, on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). We are especially interested in understanding how licensing in your state or territory has been affected by COVID-19, as well as learning more about your licensing data system, research needs, and implementation of the CCDBG Reauthorization of 2014.

We have attached a letter of support from the Office of Child Care (OCC). We are hoping to speak with child care licensing administrators in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and the five territories, about their experiences with their child care licensing systems. The goals of these interviews are to inform future research about child care licensing and create evidence-based resources to support your work.

Click below to schedule your interview and see below for more information:

<LARGE BUTTON TAKING THEM TO THE SCHEDULING PLATFORM>

Here are some additional details about this effort:

When?

We hope to complete interviews by [DATE], starting as soon as possible. Please click on the link above to schedule a time.

How much time will this phone interview take?

This will be a one-time phone call, lasting about 60 minutes.

Who is conducting these interviews?

These interviews are part of *The Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education* (TRLECE) project, led by Child Trends and ICF. TRLECE is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation

(OPRE), which is part of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). TRLECE aims to identify and address gaps in knowledge about how key features of the child care licensing system are related to program quality and outcomes for children, families, and key stakeholders (e.g., providers, licensing agencies); and develop resources to support states and territories in evaluating and strengthening their licensing systems.

What information are you collecting?

The questions will focus on your child care licensing system and changes that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic; how you use data and research; and what you would like to learn about licensing systems.

How will the information be used?

Child Trends, ICF, and OPRE staff will use these interviews to inform future research efforts and develop resources about child care licensing to support states and territories. We know that there is a lot of variation among states and territories and want to be certain we understand the full range of needs for information about child care licensing. Child Trends will develop an internal report for OPRE which may be shared with its federal partners to inform other federal efforts. This report will not public, but it may be used to inform future research efforts such as design documents, background materials for technical work groups, conceptual frameworks, and to contextualize research findings from follow-up data collections. We may also produce an informational report for OCC and its technical assistance (TA) providers to support federally-funded TA.

Will my name or the name of my state or territory be used in the report?

No, your individual name and/or contact information will not be included in the internal report for OPRE. The information you give us will be combined with other states' and territories' information to help us learn more about child care licensing systems. OPRE staff working on this research project may also receive a data file including all responses at the state agency level, but it will not include your name and/or contact information.

What are the next steps?

Click here [LINK TO SCHEDULING PLATFORM] or use the link above to select a time that works best for you. If none of these times work for you, please contact [NAME OF SCHEDULER] at [EMAIL] or [PHONE NUMBER]. Once you identify a time, we will email you a calendar invitation.

We are also interested in talking to the person in your licensing unit who knows the licensing administrative data the best. By “licensing administrative data” we mean all the information the licensing unit regularly collects, including information about licensing inspections, violations, complaints, enforcement, and initial applications. We would like to ask them questions about the types of data collected, the quality of the data, how far back it goes, and how it is used. You

can provide us with the name of that person and their contact information in the scheduling link above or during your interview.

If you do not schedule an interview, we will follow up via telephone and email. If you do not want to participate, please click here [\[LINK TO SCHEDULING PLATFORM\]](#).

Each state and territory is unique, so it is important for us to talk with every licensing administrator. We also know that you have limited time, so we will do everything possible to make this convenient and easy. Your participation is greatly appreciated, and your perspective will provide important information to inform OPRE's work.

Sincerely,

Kelly Maxwell

Follow-up recruitment email

Notes:

1. *This email will be the first reminder that we send to administrators as a part of the recruitment process. We will send it 2 days after the initial request.*
2. *Attach letter from the Office of Child Care describing the importance of the work and encouraging participation.*

Subject: Reminder: Let ACF know about your child care licensing system

Dear [CHILD CARE LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR NAME]:

Earlier this week, I sent an email about participating in a phone interview about your child care licensing system, on behalf of Administration for Children and Families (ACF). We hope you will be willing to participate and will click on the link below to select a time slot.

<LARGE BUTTON TAKING THEM TO THE SCHEDULING PLATFORM>

Here are some additional details about this effort:

When?

We hope to complete interviews by [DATE], starting as soon as you are available.

How much time will this phone interview take?

About 60 minutes, during a one-time phone call.

Who is conducting these interviews?

These interviews are part of *The Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education* (TRLECE) project, led by Child Trends and ICF. TRLECE is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), which is part of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

What information are you collecting?

The questions will focus on your child care licensing system and changes that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic; how you use data and research; and what you would like to learn about licensing systems.

How will the information be used?

Child Trends, ICF, and OPRE staff will use these interviews to inform future research efforts and develop resources about child care licensing to support states and territories. We know that there is a lot of variation among states and territories, and want to be certain we understand the full range of needs for information regarding child care licensing. We will develop an internal report for OPRE which may be shared with their federal partners. This report will not public, but

it may be used to inform future research efforts such as design documents, background materials for technical work groups, conceptual frameworks, and to contextualize research findings from follow-up data collections. We may also produce an informational report for OCC and its TA providers to support federally-funded TA.

Will my name or the name of my state or territory be used in the report?

No, your individual name and/or contact information will not be included in the internal report for OPRE. The information you give us will be combined with other states' and territories' information to help us learn more about child care licensing systems. OPRE staff working on this research project may also receive a data file including all responses at the state agency level, but it will not include your name and/or contact information.

What are the next steps?

Click here [LINK TO SCHEDULING PLATFORM] or use the link above to select a time on the project calendar. Once you identify a time, we will send you a calendar invitation. If none of these times work for you, please contact [NAME OF SCHEDULER] at [EMAIL] or [PHONE NUMBER]. When you sign up, we will also ask you for the name and contact information for the person in your licensing unit who knows the licensing administrative data the best to participate in a follow-up interview.

If you do not schedule an interview, we will be following up via telephone and email. If you do not want to participate, please click here [LINK TO SCHEDULING PLATFORM].

Each state and territory is unique, so it's important for us to talk with every licensing administrator. We also know that you have limited time, so we will do everything possible to make this convenient and easy. Your participation is greatly appreciated, and your perspective will provide important information to inform OPRE's work.

Sincerely,

Kelly Maxwell

Follow-up recruitment call script

Note: This call script will be used for a telephone call if administrators do not respond to the first two recruitment emails.

Follow-up call (if the contact person answers the phone)

Hello, my name is [NAME], and I am a part of a research team at Child Trends. I'm following-up about an email sent on [DATE] from Kelly Maxwell requesting your participation in a telephone interview to learn more about your child care licensing system, on behalf of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

We haven't yet heard from you regarding scheduling a time for the interview. Can I answer any questions or concerns you may have?

If asked about the content say:

We are especially interested in how licensing in your state/territory has been affected by COVID-19, as well as learning more about your licensing data system, research needs, and implementation of CCDBG reauthorization.

If asked about the purpose or how the information will be used:

Child Trends, ICF, and OPRE staff will use these interviews to inform future research efforts and develop resources about child care licensing to support states and territories. We know that there are a lot of differences among states and territories, and want to be certain we understand the full range of needs for information regarding child care licensing. We will develop an internal report for OPRE which may be shared with its federal partners to inform other federal efforts. This report will not public, but it may be used to inform future research efforts such as design documents, background materials for technical work groups, conceptual frameworks, and to contextualize research findings from follow-up data collections. We may also produce an informational report for OCC and its TA providers to support federally-funded TA.

Would you be willing to participate? It will take no more than one hour. We're hoping to schedule our interviews within the next couple of months and we can be very flexible to fit this into your schedule.

- *If yes:* Thank you for agreeing to do this. I'd like to find a time to schedule the interview. What is your availability to talk with us over the next two weeks? *(Select a date and time that respondent and interviewer is available)*

Great, so we'll plan to talk with you on [DATE] at [TIME]. We will send you calendar invitation and a copy of the questions we'll be asking. Thanks again, and have a great day!

- *If no:* Thank you for letting me know. Is there someone else in your agency who would be able to answer our questions about child care licensing in [STATE/TERRITORY]? Would it be possible for us to talk with him/her about participating in this interview?
 - o *If no:* Ok. Thank you for talking with me today. Have a great day!
 - o *If yes:* Great. May I have their contact information? (*Be sure to note name, title, email address, and phone number*). Thank you for your help. Have a great day!
- *If unsure:* We're hoping to schedule our interviews within the next couple of months and we can be as flexible as possible to fit this into your schedule, if needed. I will plan to call you next week to follow up. Thank you.

For those who schedule or give us the name of someone else:

We are also interested in talking to the person in your licensing unit who knows the licensing administrative data the best. By "licensing administrative data" we mean all the information the licensing unit regularly collects, including information about licensing inspections, violations, complaints, enforcement, and initial applications. We would like to ask them questions about the types of data collected, the quality of the data, how far back it goes, and how it is used. Who do you suggest we talk to? What is their email address and phone number? (*Be sure to note name, title, email address, and phone number.*)

Follow-up script for speaking with an administrative assistant

Hello, my name is [NAME] and I am a part of a research team at Child Trends. I'm following-up about an email Kelly Maxwell sent on [DATE] requesting [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] participation in a 60 minute telephone interview to learn more about [STATE/TERRITORY] child care on behalf of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We hope you can find time in [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] busy schedule to talk with us. Can you help me schedule it or should I leave a message?

If they have questions, use the responses from the script above.

- *If can schedule:* What is [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] availability to talk with us over the next two weeks? (*Select a date and time that respondent and interviewer is available*) Great, so we'll plan to talk with [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] on [DATE] at [TIME]. We will send an email to [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] and CC you with the interview time and a copy of the questions we'll be asking. What is your email address?
- *If asked to leave a message:* I certainly understand. Would you please let [LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] know that we are trying to reach them and ask them to call me at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL] to schedule an interview time? They can also use the link in the email from Kelly Maxwell sent on [DATE] to select a time that would work best for them.
- *If administrative assistant declines on behalf of licensing administrator:* Thank you for letting me know. We still hope to speak with someone in your agency who would be able to answer our questions about child care licensing in [STATE/TERRITORY]. Would you please ask [LICENSING

ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME] who else we might talk with? (*Arrange to call back for that information is needed.*)

Thanks so much. Have a great day!

Follow-up voicemail script (if the contact person does not pick up)

Hello, my name is [NAME] and I am a part of a research team at Child Trends. I'm following-up about an email sent on [DATE] from Kelly Maxwell requesting your participation in a one-hour telephone interview to learn more about your child care licensing system on behalf of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The information will be used to inform future research efforts and develop resources about child care licensing to support states and territories, so it is critical we hear from all states and territories to be certain we understand the range of issues and needs.

We hope you can find time in your busy schedule to talk with us. Please call me at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL] to schedule an interview time. You can also use the link in the email from Kelly Maxwell sent on [DATE] to select a time that would work best for you. Thanks, and have a great day!

Follow-up recruitment email

Notes:

1. *This email will be the final reminder that we send to administrators as a part of the recruitment process.*
2. *Attach letter from the Office of Child Care describing the importance of the work and encouraging participation.*

Subject: Don't miss the chance to have your experiences with child care licensing inform new resources and federal research

Dear [CHILD CARE LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR NAME]:

I'm writing to follow up on our message from last week asking you to participate in an interview about your child care licensing system, on behalf of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), part of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Child Trends, ICF, and OPRE staff will use these interviews to inform future research efforts and develop resources about child care licensing to support states and territories. Each state and territory is unique, so it's important for us to talk with every licensing administrator.

Please click on this link to select a time slot.

<LARGE BUTTON TAKING THEM TO THE SCHEDULING PLATFORM>

Note that the information you give us will be combined with other states' and territories' information to help us learn more about child care licensing systems. OPRE staff working on this research project may also receive a data file including all responses at the state agency level, but it will not include your name and/or contact information. We will create an internal report for OPRE, which may be shared with its federal partners to inform other federal efforts. This report will not public, but it may be used to inform future research efforts such as design documents, background materials for technical work groups, conceptual frameworks, and to contextualize research findings from follow-up data collections. We may also produce an informational report for OCC and its TA providers to support federally-funded TA.

If you do not want to participate – or if you would like someone else in your agency to answer our questions – please click here [LINK TOSCHEDULING PLATFORM]. This will be our final outreach about this interview, and we will assume you do not want to participate if we do not hear back from you.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Kelly Maxwell