

10A NCAC 09 .3218 COMPETENCY EVALUATIONS

(a) This Rule shall apply to operators of a family child care home, lead teachers, and teachers that choose an education standard option in this Section that requires successful completion of a competency evaluation.

(b) Successful completion of a competency evaluation means that an individual has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and abilities set forth in Paragraph (c) of this Rule.

(c) Competency evaluations shall align with the developmental domains described in the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development and address an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate experiences and interactions that support children's development and learning by:

- (1) supporting children's approaches to learning by providing engaging experiences and interactions that nurture:
 - (A) curiosity, information-seeking, and eagerness;
 - (B) play and imagination;
 - (C) risk-taking, problem-solving, and flexibility; and
 - (D) attentiveness, effort, and persistence.
- (2) engaging in responsive, respectful interactions with each child and offering guidance that supports children's emotional and social development including:
 - (A) developing a sense of self;
 - (B) developing a sense of self with others; and
 - (C) learning about feelings.
- (3) providing developmentally appropriate learning opportunities to promote children's health and physical development including:
 - (A) physical health and growth;
 - (B) motor development;
 - (C) self-care; and
 - (D) safety awareness.
- (4) facilitating verbal and non-verbal communication through back-and-forth exchanges and use developmentally appropriate, play-based experiences to promote language development and foundational emergent literary skills such as:
 - (A) learning to communicate;
 - (B) foundations for reading; and
 - (C) foundations for writing.
- (5) fostering children's cognitive development by providing experiences and interactions that support children's exploration, thinking, and knowledge of the world around them including:
 - (A) construction of knowledge;
 - (B) thinking and reasoning;
 - (C) creative expression;
 - (D) social connections;
 - (E) mathematical thinking and expression; and
 - (F) scientific exploration and knowledge.

(d) An initial competency evaluation shall be completed by individuals approved by the Division to perform the evaluation and shall include:

- (1) One in-person unannounced observation of the family child care home operator, lead teacher or teacher performing the duties of their position. The evaluator shall provide written notification to the individual requesting the competency evaluation regarding the unannounced observation to be conducted during operating hours; and
- (2) A review of documentation submitted by the family child care home operator, lead teacher or teacher that provides evidence of each applicable competency for their employment position, age range of children served, and education standards as set forth in this Rule. Evidence may include:
 - (A) sample activity plans written by the individual requesting a competency evaluation;
 - (B) anecdotal notes regarding how competencies are implemented;
 - (C) observation of the individual by a center administrator or other licensed family child care home operator;
 - (D) surveys or other type of feedback from families of children enrolled in the individual's classroom or family child care home;

- (E) audio or video recordings of activities with permission from families of children who are participants;
 - (F) self-assessment of the classroom or program using a program assessment tool;
 - (G) performance-based evaluations; and
 - (H) participation in apprenticeships, technical assistance, coaching, or mentoring processes.
- (e) The evaluator shall document the individual's competency evaluation using a form approved by the Division that includes all applicable competencies and documents how each competency was met or not met.
- (f) If the evaluator determines that the provider meets the competencies set forth in Paragraph (c) of this Rule, the provider will be notified in writing, and the successful completion determination shall be valid for a period of three years.
- (g) To renew a competency evaluation determination, the provider shall submit updated evidence of each applicable competency for their employment position and education standards as set forth in Paragraph (d)(2) of this Rule at least thirty days prior to expiration of the determination.
- (h) If the evaluator determines that the provider does not meet the competencies in Paragraph (c) of this rule, the provider shall be notified in writing and have an opportunity to provide additional information within 30 days regarding the competency evaluation before a final decision is made by a different evaluator.
- (i) When an individual does not meet the requirements for successful completion of the competency evaluation, whether or not they submit additional information for a record review, they may resubmit for a competency evaluation six months after the letter notifying them of their unsuccessful evaluation is issued, or when the second review decision is issued, whichever is later.
- (j) Competency evaluation standards and forms may be found on the Division's website at <http://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Provider/Provider-Documents-and-Forms>.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85(3); 110-88(7); 110-90(4); 143B-168.3; S.L. 2023-40; S.L. 2024-34; 42 USCS 9858e; 45 CFR 98.45; Eff. July 1, 2025.