Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Elma Early Childhood Center **Enrollment:** 55 **License ID:** 19089

Street: 319 Oak ST **City:** Elma **IA** **Zip Code:** 50628 **County:** Howard

Mailing Address: PO Box 63

Mailing City: Elma **IA** **Zip Code:** 50628

Director's Name: Samantha Burke **Center Phone Number:** 641-393-2028

On-Site Supervisors: Amy Buttolph **E-Mail Address:** elmaearlychildhood@gmail.com

Date of Complaint: 07-10-2023 **Date of Visit:** 07-10-2023

[ ] Scheduled **[ ]** Unannounced **[X]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended

[ ] PROVISIONAL license from **to**

[ ] SUSPENSION of License

[ ] REVOCATION of License

Complaint Details:

Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

On 07/10/23 a concern was reported regarding Elma Early Childhood Center. It is alleged that there were safe sleep violations in the infant room. Two infants were observed sleeping in bouncy seats in cribs with blankets. This was observed on two different occasions.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.12(5)e The provider shall follow safe sleep practices recommended by AAP for infants under one year of age:Infants shall always be placed on their back for sleep.Infants shall be placed on a firm mattress with a tight fitted sheet that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission federal standards.Infants shall not be allowed to sleep on a bed, sofa, air mattress or other soft surface. No child will be allowed to sleep in any items not designed for sleeping but not limited to, an infant seat, car seat, swing, bouncy seat.No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or loose bedding shall be allowed in the sleeping area with the infant.No co-sleeping shall be allowed.Sleeping infants shall be actively observed by sight and sound.If an alternate sleeping position is needed, a signed physician or physician assistant authorization with statement of medical reason is required.

Inspection Findings:

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On 07/10/23 I had a collateral phone contact with Heidi Walker, the childcare nurse consultant from Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). Ms. Walker states she visited Elma Early Childhood Center and on two separate occasions she observed two infants sleeping in bouncy seats in the cribs with blankets. During the first visit she told the staff member this could not occur. During one of the visits a staff member was trying to put a play apparatus over the crib to entertain them. Ms. Walker offered posters and pamphlets on safe sleep. She explained safe sleep to staff members. The staff member said they must put the children in the cribs that way to keep them separate from the children who are moving. Phyllis Koester, a childcare consultant from CCR&R has had concerns. The two visits where she witnessed this was a week apart.

Ms. Walker and I discussed the need for the entire staff at Elma Early Childhood Center to have safe sleep training. She talked with Samantha Burke, the director, about removing the bouncy seats from the room. Ms. Walker states she would provide the training. She informed me that Ms. Koester was attending the center's staff meeting tonight to address the safe sleep concerns.

On 07/10/23 I made a collateral phone call with Samantha Burke, the director of Elma Early Childhood Center. Ms. Burke states Heidi Walker made her aware of the concerns. Ms. Burke reminded infant room staff members about safe sleep practices and moved the bouncy seats. The staff members told her being in the bouncy seat is the only way one of the children sleeps. Phyllis Koester talked with them about the crib sheets being loose and those have been replaced.

I informed Ms. Burke this is a serious offense, and I am more concerned because after Ms. Walker talked with the staff members the first time about safe sleep practices, they disregarded what she said, and it happened again. I informed her that I was mandating all staff members at the center to take a safe sleep training with Ms. Walker. If another safe sleep violation occurred, the center would be placed on a provisional license and if it continued to happen, we would discuss not allowing the center to care for infants. Ms. Burke understood the seriousness of the situation and agreed to safe sleep training for all staff members. I also informed Ms. Burke that I wanted the center to work with Ms. Koester on room arrangement in the infant room if staff members are concerns about keeping mobile and immobile children apart.

On 07/10/23 I had an email correspondence with Heidi Walker, the childcare nurse consultant from Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). I informed Ms. Walker that I spoke with Samantha Burke and have mandated the center to take safe sleep training with her. She replied that she and Phyllis would get it arranged.

On 07/14/23 I emailed Phyllis Koester from CCR&R and asked how it went at the staff meeting at Elma Early Childhood Center. Ms. Koester replied on 07/17/23. Ms. Koester replied the following:

"Most of the staff were present. Samantha Burke started the meeting by telling them about the safe sleep violations within a week. She then told them if there were another safe sleep violation they would be put on a provisional license and could lose the ability to care for infants if there were one after that.

I went over the regulations and a safe sleep checklist. I asked them about their policy for safe sleep. The staff were sure they had signed one when they started employment, but no one could tell me what it was. I asked how parents were notified of the safe sleep policy. They told me it was part of the handbook parents receive, but no additional information is given to parents of infants. I passed out a sample policy and told them the importance of having the information be consistent with staff and parents. We also discussed how the recommendations have changed as we have more information about SIDS and safe sleep, as some of the staff is older. I ended by asking what they were going to do if they say a coworker putting an infant to sleep in an unsafe way. They told me they would tell the coworker that wasn't safe and how to fix the situation.

I was back in the infant room for a regularly scheduled visit on Wednesday. The staff had a few questions about blankets for toddlers and spacing of cribs. Staff seemed very open to suggestion. All babies were put to sleep safely while I was there.

Samantha told me they are going to try to hire a full time infant room teacher. I told her I thought that would help with consistency."

Special Notes and Action Required:

109.12(5)e(3). Infant Environment. Infants shall not be allowed to sleep on a bed, sofa, air mattress or other soft surface. No child shall be allowed to sleep in an item not designed for sleeping including, but not limited to, an infant care seat, swing, or bouncy seat. No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or loose bedding shall be allowed in the sleeping area with the infant. VIOLATED. On two occasions safe sleep violations were witnessed in the infant room within a week timeframe. The director has agreed to safe sleep training for all staff members through CCR&R. Heidi Walker and Phyllis Koester will work with the center to arrange the training. It will likely be toward the end of August.

Currently, the status of the center's license is unchanged. If you would like to respond to this report, please do so in writing and I will include the information in the licensing file.

Consultant's Signature:

Rebecca Frost

Date:

07-28-2023