

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Sugar Babies South	Enrollment: 31	License ID: 52702
Street: 2102 King AVE	City: Des Moines	IA Zip Code: 50320
County: Polk		
Mailing Address: 2102 King AVE		
Mailing City: Des Moines	IA Zip Code: 50320	
Director's Name: Lenae Arke	Center Phone Number: 515-428-0082	
On-Site Supervisors: Samika Gates	E-Mail Address: sugarbabiesacademyabc123@gmail.com	

Date of Complaint: 04-03-2025**Date of Visit:** 04-07-2025
☐ Scheduled
☒ Unannounced
☐ NA

☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found
☐ Compliance with Regulations Found
RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE☒ 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 ☒ NoDid this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No**Summary of Complaint:**

On 4/3/25, this consultant received the following concerns:

1. The owner interfered with a child abuse assessment on one of the families they enroll.
2. Staff did not check the HHS worker's ID when this person arrived.
3. Staff are forced to work when their own children are sick and bring their children to the center with them.
4. Lenae, the owner/director, is rarely present at the center and the center does not have an on-site supervisor.
5. Infant children are left in their car seats for extended periods of time while attending the center.

Additionally, upon observation, staff files are incomplete and unorganized. (Record checks and physicals specifically reviewed).

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.4(2)h Develop a policy to ensure that people do not have unauthorized access to children at the center. Include: Criteria for allowing people on the property when children are present. How people will be supervised or monitored. How responsibility will be delegated to staff. How the policy will be shared with parents.

109.4(4) Requirements and procedures for mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse shall be posted where they can be read by staff and parents.

109.6(2) Director or on-site supervisor on-site during the hours of operation or a minimum of six hours of center's hours of operation.

Information on on-site supervisor's qualifications is submitted to the consultant prior to employment and is sufficient to make a determination.

On-site supervisor meets qualifications or is "qualifiable" with a plan established to meet qualifications.

109.9(1)b All files contain: A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information. Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted. Copies of national criminal history check results. Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

109.9(1)d All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.

109.10 Center shall establish health policies, including criteria for excluding a sick child. Policies shall be consistent with the recommendations of the National Health and Safety Performance Standards.

109.12(5) Environment for children under age two protects from harm but does not unduly restrict development.

Inspection Findings:

On 4/3/25, this consultant had email correspondence with the initial reporter, the HHS Child Abuse Assessment worker, and Lenae Arku, the owner/director of the center. This consultant also spoke to Lenae, and the HHS worker by phone. A request for a phone call from the reporter was not returned as of the time of this report.

As it pertains to interfering with a child abuse assessment, Lenae admitted that she did contact the parent by phone after the HHS worker arrived. Lenae was not present at the center, but was informed of the situation when staff called her. Lenae then attempted a three-way phone call between the parent and the HHS worker. Lenae then later picked up the older child at school although she denied it was because the parent requested it so that the HHS worker could not confidentially access the older child at the school. The HHS worker was unable to complete their interviews with staff because of Lenae's actions. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.4(4).

In regards to not checking IDs for people who come to the center to visit, pick up children, or in this case, interview children as part of an assessment, the HHS worker stated they identified themselves upon arrival to staff and were wearing an identification badge. Staff confirmed this when this consultant made an unannounced visit to the center. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.4(2)H.

In regards to sick policies not being followed and staff being required to bring their own sick children to the center so that they can work, staff questioned denied this is happening. All staff and children, upon physical appearance and activities observed, appeared to be healthy. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.10.

On the day of the complaint visit, the owner/director and the on-site supervisor (who was approved on 4/7/25, there wasn't an on-site prior to this date) were not present. This consultant was at the center from roughly 11:00am - 11:40am. The center's hours of operations are 6:30am - 6:00pm. Lenae stated she was at another one of her centers when this consultant spoke to her by phone. This worker was informed the on-site supervisor (who again wasn't even approved until 4/7/25 despite prior emails about the on-site supervisor form request and completing an I - Power request) was running late. There is sufficient evidence based on what was reported and observed on the day of the visit that the director and/or on-site supervisor are not present at least six hours of every single day. There can be situations where both can be absent and another person put in charge, but in this case, the center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.6(2). IT IS NOTED THAT AN ON-SITE SUPERVISOR IS NOW APPROVED SO THIS SHOULD BE A NON-ISSUE GOING FORWARD SO LONG AS AN ON-SITE SUPERVISOR REMAINS ON STAFF.

It was reported that infants are left in car seats for extended periods throughout the day. The person who reported this did not, however, know how long children had been in car seats upon observation. When this consultant made a visit to the center, he did not observe any children in car seats. Three children were in high chairs eating and one child was being held by staff. Staff denied children are left in car seats throughout the day. There is not sufficient evidence to conclude children are being left in car seats. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.12(5).

While at the center, this consultant again looked through several files. Several files were missing items that are required. This consultant focused on SING checks, fingerprinting, and physicals. One staff member who started work on 4/7/25, did not have a physical or SING, and fingerprinting had not yet been completed. The SING for this new staff member was completed after the visit and after this consultant required Lenae email all record checks again to this consultant for employees who work for Sugar Babies. Several other files were missing physicals. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATIONS 109.9(1)B AND 109.9(1)D.

Special Notes and Action Required:

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

This consultant completed the center's licensing inspections on 2/19/25 and then again on 2/28/25. After those inspections, the center was encouraged to reach out to CCR&R for assistance to make improvements. This consultant followed up several times by email about this recommendations between those dates and the complaint visit on 4/7/28. After the complaint visit on 4/7/25, this consultant changed it to a requirement to meet with CCR&R. Lenae has reached out to CCR&R and scheduled a visit with them for 4/11/25 and 4/22/25. The center's CCR&R consultant confirmed these scheduled visits. Lenae will be gone from the center on 4/11/25, but the on-site supervisor will be present for that visit.

If staff work at multiple centers owned by Lenae, they should have a file at each location with all information required in the files. Staff will also need to create I - Power profiles and be uploading training. This was also mentioned after the center's licensing inspection on 2/28/25. The staff tracking sheet was again emailed to the center after the complaint visit.

Failure to comply with licensing regulations may result in the center being downgraded to a provisional license in the future.

Consultant's Signature:

Nathan Knepper

Date:

04-08-2025