



Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, 670 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Phone: (404) 657-5562 WWW.DECAL.GA.GOV

Investigation Report

Date: 2/9/2026

VisitType: Complaint Investigation Closure from CI FollowUp on 12/16/2025

FR-14607

Hiller, Martha

35 COLDWATER WAY Covington, GA 30016 Newton County
(678) 342-6542 xpec2wn@comcast.net

Special Investigations Unit Specialist

Brittany Cook

Phone: (706) 434-4412

Fax: (706) 434-7708

brittany.cook@dec.al.ga.gov

Mailing Address

Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation			Compliance Zone Designation - A summary measure of a program's 12 month monitoring history, as it pertains to child care health and safety rules. The three compliance zones are good standing, support, and deficient. Good Standing - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules. Support - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules. Deficient - Program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.
02/09/2026	Complaint Closure	Support	
12/16/2025	Complaint Investigation Follow Up	Good Standing	
08/21/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	

Comments

December 16, 2025- The investigation was not concluded on this date.

February 9, 2026- The investigation was concluded on this date and reviewed with Martha Hiller, Provider.

Advisement of Potential for Repeated Rule Violations during Pending Investigations

This report shall serve as official notice of potential rule violations. These potential rule violations have been detailed in this report and discussed with you by the consultant. The department shall conduct a thorough investigation to determine if in fact the alleged rule violation(s) should or should not be substantiated. Please be aware that the investigation may take some time to be finalized to ensure fairness and accuracy. During this investigation period, any violations of an identical rule or rules will require the department to treat any and all substantiated rule violations identified in the investigation as repeated rule violation(s).

Further, from time to time the department discovers additional rule violations during the course of an investigation. If there are new rule violation(s), your consultant shall inform you of the violation(s) as soon as possible. However, as stated above, any violations of identical rule(s) will require the department to treat any and all additional rule violations identified in the investigation as repeated rule violations.

All rule violations found in relation to a complaint or incident investigation will be associated with the date the investigation was closed.



Please refer to the website, <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx>, for information regarding October 1, 2018 rule changes about Criminal Records Checks that may affect your facility. In summary,

- New records checks will be required to be completed if a staff member experiences a six month break in service from the child care industry
- New clearance is required at least once every five years
- Any staff member solely responsible for supervising children will be required to have completed a comprehensive background clearance
- All staff members are required to have completed at least a national fingerprint based clearance check
- Any staff member with only the national fingerprint based clearance, must be under constant and direct supervision of a staff member with a satisfactory comprehensive records check clearance
- Facilities are required to use DECAL KOALA for Criminal Records Checks, including to verify portability of an employee

O.C.G.A. Section 42.1.12(i)(2) requires Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to notify licensed child care programs on accessing and retrieving from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's (GBI) website a list of the names and addresses of all registered sexual offenders. Please see GBI's website located at <http://gbi.georgia.gov> to access the Georgia Sex Offender Registry.

Refutation Process:

You have the right to refute any of the citations noted in this report with which you disagree. To refute a citation(s), do the following:

- 1) Log into DECAL KOALA www.decalkoala.com with the userid for your program
- 2) On the home page scroll down to the Inspection Reports and select 'Refute Citation' for the visit report in dispute
- 3) Select the specific rule number(s) that you are refuting, add the reason for disagreement regarding the rule citation, and upload supporting documentation
- 4) Submit the refutation in DECAL KOALA to Child Care Services (CCS) within 10 business days of the completion date.

Your refutation will be forwarded to the appropriate CCS manager, who will follow up with you about your concerns. If you have any questions about this process, contact our office at 404-657-5562.

Bright from the Start recommends that all licensed child care providers carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect its clients. If you do not have this liability insurance, you are required to post a notice with ½ inch letters in a conspicuous location in the program, notify the parent or guardian of each child in care in writing, obtain their signature to acknowledge receipt and maintain this written acknowledgment on file at the program at all times while the child attends the program and for 12 months after the child's last date of attendance. (O.C.G.A. Section 20-1A-4)

I have read and understand the Rules and Regulations for Family Child Care Learning Home, 290-2-3. I acknowledge that the items noted in this report have been discussed with me and I have agreed to a Plan of Improvement (POI) as indicated in this report. I understand that correction of these deficiencies, while required, will not necessarily prevent DECAL from taking adverse action against this facility. I understand that if I disagree with any of the deficiencies cited, I have the right to refute them on this report or any other form that I choose to send to Child Care Services.



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Summary Report

Date: 2/9/2026 VisitType: Complaint Investigation Closure Arrival: 11:50 AM Departure: 3:25 PM
from CI FollowUp on 12/16/2025

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The following information is associated with a Complaint Closure:

Children's Records

290-2-3-.08 Children's Records

Not Met

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.08(1) requires the Home to have a current and updated record for each Child in care and for a period of one (1) year after each Child leaves. Such records shall include: identifying information (Child's name, birth date, Parent's name, home and business addresses, telephone numbers); name, address and telephone number of persons, including Child's physician, to contact in emergencies; and name, address, telephone numbers, relationship to Child and to Parent(s) and other identifying information of person(s) to whom the Child may be released. It was determined based on an investigation that care was provided for a child who did not have a children's record available for review on December 16, 2025.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.08(9) requires that the Parent or person(s) authorized by the Parent or guardian to drop off and pick up the Child document each time the Parent or authorized person drops off and picks up the Child. The documentation shall include at least the following information: the date, the Child's name, the arrival and departure times, and the signature or initials of the Parent or authorized person and shall be made available to the Department in printed or written form upon request. It was determined that care was provided for a 1-year-old child who did not have documented arrival and departure records on file on December 16, 2025. According to statements, the 1-year-old child attended the Home on December 1, 2025, through December 5, 2025, December 8, 2025, and December 9, 2025. It was also determined that on December 10, 2026, a 3-year-old child was marked as present when statements and interviews revealed that the child did not attend the Home on that date. Accurate reflection of each child's attendance was required daily.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026

Policies and Procedures

290-2-3-.14 Required Reporting

Not Met

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.14(3) requires that within twenty-four (24) hours or the next work day, the Provider or designated person-in-charge report or cause to be reported any suspected incident of child abuse, neglect or deprivation to the local County Division of Family and Children Services in accordance with state law and to the Department, notifying that such a report was made. It was determined based on an investigation that the Home failed to report to the Department and the local County Division of Family and Children Services when a 3-year-old child received professional medical attention due to suspected child abuse. According to interviews and statements, the Home was made aware on December 10, 2026, at approximately 9:00a.m. that professional medical attention was being sought. The Home did not submit a report within 24 hours as required.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026

Staff Records

290-2-3-.21 Criminal Records and Comprehensive Background Checks(CR)

Not Met

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.21(1)(a) requires the Home to ensure that the Provider, every actual and potential Employee(including residents age 17 and older) and Provisional Employee of the Family Child Care Learning Home has submitted both a Records Check Application to the Department and Fingerprints to an authorized fingerprinting site. It was determined based on an investigation that Staff #1 was present in the Provider's home and residing there on December 9, 2025, without the required background check having been submitted to the Department. Interviews further confirmed that Staff # had been a resident of the Provider's home for approximately four to five years.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.21(1)(c) requires every Employee to have a current and valid satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file prior to being present at the Home while any child is present for care or before residing in the Home if age 17 or older. The Comprehensive Records Check Determination must have a Records Check Clearance Date that is no older than the preceding 12 months of the hire date; provided, however, if the Employee has had a lapse of employment from the child care industry that lasted for 180 days (6 months) or longer, a new satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination is required. It was determined based on an investigation that Staff #1 was present in the Provider's home on December 9, 2025, without a required criminal record check and comprehensive background check on file. Interviews further confirmed that Staff # had been a resident of the home for approximately four to five years.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026

Staff:Child Ratios and Supervision

290-2-3-.07 Staff:Child Ratios(CR)

Not Met

Finding Associated with Complaint

290-2-3-.07(16) requires the Home to ensure that the total number of Children not Related to the Provider in the Family Child Care Learning Home, for pay or not for pay, cannot exceed six Children, except that a Provider may care for two additional children who are three years of age or older for two designated one hour periods daily upon approval by the Department. It was determined based on an investigation that one staff member was providing care for four 1-year-old children, one 2-year-old child, one 3-year-old child, and one 4-year-old child on December 1, 2025, through December 5, 2025, December 8, 2025, and December 9, 2025. According to statements and records, none of the children were related to the Provider. Two staff members would have been required for the care of seven non-related children.

Correction Deadline: 2/9/2026