



The Patricia Siegel Act of 2016

Updating the California Education Code to Match Current Practices meeting the needs of California's Working Families

Since 1976, California has invested in Child care Resource and Referral programs (R&Rs) to help all parents find child care by identifying the full range of existing public and private, licensed and license-exempt, subsidized or fee-based, child care services. Every county in California is served by at least one R&R program. The Early Education and Support Division of the California Department of Education administer the R&Rs' state contracts. R&Rs give parents information such as types of programs that are available, the hours of service, ages of children served, and fees and eligibility for services. R&Rs also develop and provide training on a variety of topics for providers and work with community resources and public agencies to help develop local child care plans. The roles and responsibilities of R&Rs are dispersed throughout the Education and Health & Safety Codes, regulations, and in the Funding Terms and Conditions developed by the Department of Education.

This year marks the **40th Anniversary of Child Care Resource and Referral Programs in California**. In practice, R&Rs have changed and adapted over the years to meet the needs of families, children and providers in their local communities. However, the Education Code has not been adjusted to reflect these changes. It is time for California to update the language in the Education Code that relates to R&R agencies¹ to match current practice. This update will preserve quality consumer education and provider support in California, and position the state as they prepare to implement elements of the recently reauthorized CCDBG Act.

The Network recommends updating the Education Code to reflect the work of R&R programs today. The recommended changes are summarized as follows:

- Replace language that established an out of date fixed funding rate for R&Rs with a general funding allocation statement.
- Expand the comprehensive child care planning process “My Child Care Plan” to provide consistency for how referrals are provided.
- Codify the various ways families conduct their child care search including utilizing technology/online child care planning
- Protections from distribution of provider information to be consistent with the Health and Safety Code, especially for small family child care providers.
- Utilizes the R&R as the state’s infrastructure for collecting information about the supply and demand of children care.

¹ California Health and Safety Code § 159.66(a), California Education Code § 8200-8209.