

**New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool
Section II: The Standards**



Safety and Environmental Health

There are safeguards in place to protect youth from obtaining a major injury or illness while at the program and to provide for their basic comforts.

- 1. Staff are aware of the individual health needs of the youth.**

Staff are aware of youths' dietary restrictions, allergies, medications, and other individual health needs, and they keep this information confidential. Staff may carry a list of youth with food allergies during snack or meal time as an added precaution.
- 2. Staff are alert to potential hazards in the indoor and outdoor environment.**

Staff recognize potentially dangerous conditions as they appear and take immediate precautions to protect youth from any serious hazards they see in the indoor and outdoor environment.
- 3. The program conducts regular inspections using checklists to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment is clean and free of hazards that can cause injury or illness to the youth.**
 - a. The program conducts daily, [periodic](#), and bi-annual inspections and uses an appropriate checklist for each. *See the resources section for sample checklists.* (Note: NJ Licensing includes basic requirements in the areas of cleanliness and environmental hazards. In some cases, the NJ Quality Standards for Afterschool sample checklists go beyond licensing requirements.)
 - b. The program addresses any problems with hazards or cleanliness quickly by either making immediate corrections or ensuring youth are not exposed to the hazard. If the hazard requires longer term remediation, the program follows up as necessary.
- 4. The program takes security precautions that exceed New Jersey Licensing regulations.**
 - a. The program conducts annual state and federal background checks (or confirms that background checks have already been conducted) on enrichment providers, presenters, and volunteers who will be alone with youth at any time, in addition to regular staff. A staff person is present at all times when non-staff without background checks are with youth. Non-staff sign in and out when visiting the program. The program makes families aware of these policies.
 - b. All of the doors to the program's spaces are locked to the outdoors and monitored from inside.
 - c. The program's outdoor space is secured to protect youth from various hazards, including cars, strangers, and animals.
 - d. There are policies or procedures in place to ensure youth move safely from one space to another.
 - e. Parents or guardians periodically update signed forms allowing non-parents/guardians to pick up youth.

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- f. The program has a policy on the release of youth to walk home unaccompanied. If programs allow youth to walk home, it is based on an assessment of the safety of the walking route for that particular location and time and the developmental level of the youth.
- g. Staff [periodically](#) assess security at the program, identify potential problems, and address problems quickly.

5. The program is prepared for emergencies.

- a. The program has a “go kit,” which contains essential information and items to take quickly in case of an emergency evacuation. The kit should be portable and reachable in the case of an evacuation. *See the resources section for “go kit” checklist and recommendations.*
- b. The program has emergency information on file for both youth and staff. This includes emergency contact information and information about necessary medications or extreme allergic reactions. Staff check that emergency information is updated at least two times a year. This file should be portable and reachable in the case of an evacuation. The program follows a policy to keep emergency information about staff and youth confidential.
- c. The program has an “[emergency preparedness plan](#),” developed in consultation with the host agency, law enforcement, fire department, health professionals, and the county Office of Emergency Management. This includes a plan for emergencies that occur during the arrival or departure portions of the program.
- d. Staff are trained in the emergency plan, and trainings are redone periodically. The emergency plan has designated lead people, and these leaders review the plan periodically.
- e. The program communicates the emergency plan to parents/guardians.
- f. Staff and youth practice the emergency plan and conduct emergency drills.

6. Transportation in vehicles is safe.

- a. The program requires use of age-appropriate safety restraints.
- b. The program maintains documentation of vehicle inspections and drivers' driving records.
- c. If the program uses [buses](#) to transport youth, the administration considers the number and ages of youth to decide whether to provide a bus monitor. This person's role would include tracking youth and monitoring behavior and safety. For any transportation arrangement with a driver who is not program staff, the program provides a bus monitor.

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7. Staff take special precautions during activities requiring an increased attention to safety.

- a. Staff and youth use appropriate safety gear during these activities, and there is proper instruction about how to use it.
- b. If these activities involve the use of any special materials or equipment, staff and youth have proper instruction about their use.
- c. There is increased supervision during these activities.
- d. The program conducts a risk assessment of these activities to determine what precautions are necessary.

8. The program provides for the basic comforts of the youth.

- a. The indoor temperature is within a safe and comfortable range.
- b. The indoor environment is well-ventilated.
- c. When outdoors, youth have access to shade.
- d. Youth always have access to drinking water, including when outside.
- e. Youth always have access to restrooms, including when outside.
- f. There is a supply of extra coats, gloves, and boots for winter, to the extent possible.

<u>Cross-References</u>		
Subject	Category	Standard Number
Supervision of youth	Administration	12
Obtaining information from parents about the special health conditions or other special needs of youth	Special Needs/The Whole Child	4

<u>Licensing</u>	
Subject	NJ Licensing Section
Indoor maintenance and sanitation requirements	10:122-5.2(a)
Outdoor maintenance and sanitation requirements, including requirements regarding playground equipment	10:122-5.2(b)
Equipment, materials, and furniture safety	10:122-5.2(p)
Environmental sanitation requirements, including smoking prohibition	10:122-7.7(a)
Personal hygiene requirements, including hand-washing	10:122-7.8(a)

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Obtaining information from parents about the special health conditions or other special needs of youth	10:122-7.3(b)
Emergency procedure requirements and first aid requirements	10:122-5.2 (l), 10:122-5.2(o)
Supervision and tracking of youth and staff/child ratios	10:122-4.3
Release of children	10:122-6.5(a), 10:122-6.8(a)3
Transportation	10:122-9