



Department of Health and Human Services
N.C. Division of Child Development
Basic Information for Potential Family Child Care Homes

What is a Family Child Care Home?

A family child care home is a child care arrangement located in a resident where, at any one time, more than two children, but less than nine children, receive child care. The Division of Child Development must license family child care homes.

To determine whether you are required to be licensed to operate a family child care home, answer these two questions:

1. Will I be caring for more than two children who are not related to me?
2. Will the children be present for more than four hours a day?

If the answer to both questions is yes, you need to be licensed.

Once you complete the steps and you become licensed, you will receive a one star rated license. A one star rating indicates your facility meets minimum licensing standards. You may voluntarily choose to apply for a 2-5 star rated license, which indicates you meet higher standards.

Information on how you can receive a 2-5 star rated license will be discussed during your initial visit with your child care consultant.

Steps for Becoming Licensed

Complete the attached form to request an application packet for homes. The application packet does not include a copy of the child care law rules. You will need to purchase a copy of the law and rules or purchase a FCCH Handbook, which includes a copy of the law and rules. Review the application packet carefully to decide whether you can meet all the requirements. If you have any questions contact a customer service representative at 1-800-859-0829 or the child care consultant assigned to your area. Your consultant's name and address will be included in the application packet. Check with your county and city governments to find out if there are additional local ordinances.

Complete and mail all of the following to your child care consultant.

- Application (DCD 0055)
- A photocopy of your local history check
- Proof that you have completed a first aid and CPR course in the last year
- Proof of negative TB test results taken within the last year
- Completed Health Questionnaire
- Negative well water bacteriological test (if you are on a private well)
- Proof of up-to-date vaccinations (if you have pets)

Until you have completed the application process and you are licensed, you may legally care for no more than two children who are unrelated to you. As of December 1, 2003, it is a Class 1 felony to willfully operate a family child care home without being licensed.

Requirements for Family Child Care Homes

How Many May I Have in Care?

You will be allowed to care for a total of eight children at one time, but no more than five of these children may be younger than school-age. If you will be providing care in a single-wide manufactured home, you will be allowed to care for a total of five children, of whom no more than three may be preschoolers. In addition, no more than two of these preschoolers may be less than three years old.

Once licensed, you must count all of the children present who are younger than school-age, even if they are related to you. You must also count all school-age children except your own, or other school-age children who live in the home. For these purposes, a school-age child is one who: 1) is attending or has attended a public or private grade school or kindergarten, and 2) is at least five years old on or before October 16 of the current school year.

What Qualifications Must I Have?

Prior to the issuance of a license, North Carolina Law requires that you, all persons you employ, and all household members over the age of 15 who are present when children are in care complete a criminal records check for county and State criminal histories. If you or others, have not lived in North Carolina continuously for five years, an additional national criminal history check is required.

- Must not habitually use alcohol to excess or illegally use narcotics or other impairing drugs.
- Must not be mentally or emotionally impaired to the extent that you are likely to injure children.
- Must be at least 21 years old, have a high school diploma or GED.
- Must be able to recognize symptoms of common childhood illnesses.
- Before you are licensed, you must successfully complete a basic first aid course and an appropriate course in CPR given by the American heart Assoc. or the American Red Cross.
- Complete ITS-SIDS training within the first four months of being licensed, if you care for children 12 months of age and younger.

Are There Other Requirements?

- Your home must comply with all current building code requirements for family child care homes.
 - Your home must have an electrically operated smoke alarm with a battery back-up.
 - Your home must have at least a 5lb 2-A; 10-B;C type extinguisher.
 - You must prepare for emergency situations and take steps to provide a safe, healthy environment both indoors and outdoors.
 - You must serve nutritious meals and snacks
 - You must follow sanitary procedures in preparing and serving food and in diapering children.
 - You must offer frequent opportunities for outdoor play.
 - You must provide an adequate resting space with clean linens for each child.
 - You are not allowed to use corporal punishment unless you are operating under the provisions of G.S. 110-106.1 for religious -sponsored homes.
 - You must develop and adopt a Safe Sleep Policy, if you are licensed to care for infants 12 months of age and younger.
 - Smoking and use of tobacco products are prohibited from being used in the home while children are in care.
 - You must complete 12 hours of in-service training annually.
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