



Becoming a Registered Family Day Care Home Provider

The Department of Children and Families is responsible for the annual registration of family day care homes. Registration is an alternative to licensure for family day care home providers, which includes registering annually with the Department, unless licensure is required. Please note that you must complete the registration process before caring for children in your home. You cannot operate until you receive an email with your Notice of Registration Confirmation.

Note: If you live in one of the following counties: **Brevard, Broward, Clay, Duval, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Nassau, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota or St. John's**, you cannot become a registered home- you are required to be licensed. ([Click here](#))

Please click on the county that applies to you, and call the applicable phone number to your county listed above.

Thinking About Opening a Registered Family Day Care Home?

Opening a registered family day care home business can be challenging and somewhat costly. Having a basic knowledge of good business practices and an understanding of the minimum requirements of operating a family day care home will help you make an informed decision as to whether you want to apply to become registered.

Requirements for Registration must be completed prior to approval to operate:

General Requirements:

- The family day care home operator must be 18 years of age or older.
- The family day care home operation must be in the home where the operator resides.
- The family day care home operator cannot work outside the home during the hours of operation of the family day care home.
- The family day care home operator must have proof of a written plan to provide at least one other competent adult to be available to substitute for the operator in case of an emergency.
- The family day care home operator must provide a copy of a completed Health and Safety Checklist ([click here](#)) to each parent on an annual basis.
- There is a \$25 application fee for both initial applications and annual renewals.

- Verify there are no restrictions in your Neighborhood Association Covenants that prohibit the operation of a family day care home in your residence. City and County governments cannot pass zoning laws that prohibit the use of your home as a family day care home, however, Neighborhood Associations can establish covenants that prohibit the use of a residence as a family day care home. Additionally, if you are renting/leasing your home verify with your landlord and/or refer to your lease agreement regarding the ability to operate a business in your residence.

Training Requirements:

If you meet the general requirements above, completing the required training is the first step in the registration process before submitting your Intent to Apply. Training is the most time-consuming and challenging part of the registration process. Until you have successfully completed all required training and passed the competency exams, you cannot receive your home registration.

- Family day care home operators are required to successfully complete the following 30 hours of training which is divided into five courses. To receive credit for this training, the operator must pass a competency exam for each course:
 - a. Family Child Care Home Rules and Regulations-6 hours
 - b. Health, Safety, and Nutrition-8 hours
 - c. Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect-4 hours
 - d. Child Growth and Development-6 hours
 - e. Behavioral Observation and Screening-6 hours
- Family day care home operators must complete 5 hours or .5 Continue Education Units (CEUs) in early literacy and language development of children ages birth to five years.
- To register for the training and to obtain more information about scheduling competency exams, go to www.myflfamilies.com/childcare and choose the “Training and Registry Login” link or contact the Child Care Training Information Center (CCTIC) at 1-888-352-2842.

Background Screening Requirements:

Once you have completed the training requirements, the next step is to complete the background screening requirements. The operator, household members, and substitute(s) must be cleared through background screening prior to the registration of a family day care home. Please note that the screening process has changed:

- a. All background screening must be processed through the Background Screening Clearinghouse. In order to gain access to the clearinghouse you must complete the Intent to Apply below. Once your request has been processed, an email will be sent to you with instructions on completing and confirming your access account through the Clearinghouse. Please be advised that your Clearinghouse account will remain in a pending status until the additional steps have been completed, therefore it is critical that you follow the directions in the email carefully. As part of the new user registration process you will be prompted to print a ‘User agreement’ form and send it along with a copy of your photo identification to the background screening office. Once the account

is approved you will receive email confirmation from the Clearinghouse system informing you that your access has been approved and you can begin initiating and managing your screening. For step-by-step guidance on initiating screenings in the clearinghouse click here or visit the background screening website at

www.dcfbackgroundscreening.com.

- b. The family day care home operator, household members 18 years or age and older, and substitutes must complete an Affidavit of Good moral Character (AGMC) [click here](#). The AGMC must be notarized.
 - c. Arrest or conviction for any disqualifying offenses by you, your substitute or household member, without being granted an exemption from disqualification, will prevent you from operating a registered family day care home. A list of the disqualifying offenses is listed on the AGMC.
 - d. The family day care home substitute must complete a Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements form [click here](#). The family day care home operator attests to these requirements as part of the application process and doesn't require a separate form.
 - e. The family day care home operator must provide documentation of the last five years of employment at a minimum.
- Household members, age 12-17 years must complete a delinquency records check ([link to JRC](#)). Include an \$8.00 check or money order and mail to FDLE at the address on the form. Clearinghouse Fingerprinting is not required for household members ages 12-17 years of age.
 - Household members under age 12 are not required to be screened.
 - The family day care home operator and household members of any age will be subject to a Central Abuse Hotline.

What are the Ratio and Capacity Requirements?

A family day care home shall be allowed to provide care for one of the following groups of children, which shall include those children under 13 years of age who are related to the caregiver:

1. A maximum of four children from birth to 12 months of age
2. A maximum of three children from birth to 12 months of age, and other children, for a maximum total of six children
3. A maximum of six preschool children if all are older than 12 months of age
4. A maximum of 10 children if no more than 5 are preschool age and of those 5, no more than 2 are under 12 months of age.

What else should I consider as I open my Business?

When you are caring for children in your home, you are running a small business. You must comply with the Department of Children & Families family day care rules and regulations. There may be other laws, rules, and regulations which you must comply with. You must also think about the business practices which will help and protect you.

1. Landlord - If you are renting your home, will your landlord agree to this type of business in the residence?

2. Occupational License - Some cities and counties require that you apply for an occupational license. You must check with your local government about this. Usually the Building and Zoning Department handles this.
3. IRS - You are responsible for your own self-employment taxes. Remember the parents you are serving are going to be claiming your services and submitting your social security # at the end of the year. You need to find out what you are responsible for and what tax benefits you can receive. Call 1 (800) TAX-1040 for information on "Running a Small Business in Your Home."
4. Bookkeeping/Accounting Services - It helps to know what kind of financial records you should keep. It will help at tax time and make your business more profitable. Check with your local Community College to see if they offer business counseling. SCORE is a volunteer organization which does offer business advice and counseling. Check your phone book.
5. Contract - Do you have your policies in writing? Do you go over these with your clients and have them sign before they become your clients?
6. Professional Organizations - These will give you support, advice and training. There are several including local, State and National Family Day Care Associations.
7. Training - Consider taking courses in CPR, First Aid, Child Development, etc. These are highly desirable to many of your potential families in care.

Once all of the above information has been reviewed and the requirements have been met, you will be ready to complete the Family Day Care Home Registration intent online ([Click here](#) to begin the Registered Family Day Care Home "Intent to Apply" process). Once your intent to apply has been submitted, you will receive an email with information on getting access to the Clearinghouse background screening as well as additional forms to fill out and return for your application/registration.

If you need additional assistance, please call:

The Department of Children and Families Child Care Program Office at **(850) 488-4900**