



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.

Opening a Family Child Care Home Program (OPENH) Course:

The Department of Children and Families, Office of Child Care Regulation is offering a new online course, *Opening a Family Child Care Home Program*. The goal of this course is to provide individuals with an overview of opening a family child care home program in Florida. Upon completion of this course, child care professionals will be able to:

- Describe the responsibilities of a family child care provider
- Analyzes the need for a family child care home in your area and what services are needed
- Establish Goals and a guiding philosophy for your family child care home
- Identify the operational requirements of opening a family child care home
- Develop finance and budget management plans for the program
- Identify elements of program structure that need to be developed

Additionally, 0.3 CEUs may be earned for completing this three-hour course. To access this course, go to <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/> and select "Training and Registry Login."

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 property owner and/or refer to your lease agreement regarding the ability to operate a business in your residence. Family day care home operators must obtain written approval from local government entities, HOA (if applicable), and/or Landlord (if applicable), or a signed [Zoning Building Code/HOA Attestation](#) acknowledging their responsibility for compliance.

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:
 - ✓ Family Child Care Home Rules and Regulations (FCHR – 6 hours)
 - ✓ Health, Safety, and Nutrition (HSAN – 8 hours)
 - ✓ Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (CAAN – 4 hours)
 - ✓ Child Growth and Development (CGDR – 6 hours)
 - ✓ Behavioral Observation and Screening (BOSR – 6 hours)
- Family day care home operators must complete a single course of training in early literacy and language development of children ages birth to five years. The course must be a minimum of 5-clock-hours or 0.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and may be fulfilled through one of the following sources:
 - ✓ One of the Department’s web based courses: Early Literacy Birth to Three or Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors
 - OR**
 - ✓ An approved literacy course. A list of approved courses can be found [here](#) **OR**
 - ✓ One college level early literacy courses (for credit or non-credit) if taken within the last five years.
- To register for the training and to obtain more information about scheduling competency exams, go to <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/> 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**. **The screening components below will be completed as part of your application process:**

- **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).** Required for operator, adult household members and substitute. All electronic fingerprinting must be submitted and processed through the Background Screening Clearinghouse.
 - a) In order to gain access to the clearinghouse, you must complete the Intent to Apply. [Click here](#) for the Intent to Apply.
 - b) Once your request has been processed, you will be able to register as a user in the clearinghouse. Instructions for registering as user in the Clearinghouse can be found [here](#) .
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 User Registration Guide carefully.
 - c) Guidance on initiating screenings through the Clearinghouse can be found [here](#) .
IMPORTANT! Operators must initiate all screenings through the Clearinghouse prior to fingerprinting. Failure to initiate the screening prior to fingerprinting may result in screening delays, an invalid screening, or the individual may have to be re-fingerprinted at an additional cost.

- **Out of State Criminal Record Checks.** Required for operator, adult household members and substitutes that have lived outside of the state of Florida in the preceding five years.
 - a) The background screening unit is able to utilize the FBI criminal history results to satisfy the out-of-state criminal record check requirement for individuals whose out-of-state residency was in a state that participates in the FBI National Fingerprint File (NFF) program. A list of states participating in the National Fingerprint File (NFF) program can be found [here](#) .
 - b) If the individual's prior state of residency **does not participate** in the FBI National Fingerprint File (NFF) program, an out of state criminal history record must be submitted to background screening unit for review. The results may be faxed to: (850) 487-6030, emailed to: bgs.outofstate.admin@myflfamilies.com or mailed to: Department of Children and Families Background Screening Program 2415 N. Monroe Street, Suite 1176, Tallahassee, Florida 32303.

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Checks.** Required for operator, adult household members and substitute that have lived outside of the state of Florida in the preceding five years.

Nationwide criminal history record request and abuse and neglect registry check information can be found [here](#).

- **Sex Offender Registry Checks.** Required for operator, adult household members and substitute that have lived outside of the state of Florida in the preceding five years. For nationwide sex offender searches, please visit <https://www.nsopw.gov/>
- **Juvenile Records Check (FDLE).** Required for all juvenile household members 12 to 17 years of age. Request must be submitted online through the [FDLE public portal](#). The ORI number FL721911Z must be used at the time of request. Complete instructions on how to request a juvenile record can be found at [Online Juvenile Records Check](#)
- **Child Care Attestation of Good Moral Character (AGMC).** Required for operator, adult household members and substitute. This form can be found [here](#)
NOTE! 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.
- **Mandatory Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements Form.** Required for the substitute. The family day care home operator attests to these requirements as part of the application process and doesn't require a separate form. This form must be completed on an annual basis and can be found [here](#)

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 and Families family day care rules and regulations. There may be other laws, rules, and regulations with which you must comply. You must also think about the business practices which will help and protect you.

1. Property Owner – If you are renting your home, will your property owner 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 Pediatric CPR, First Aid, Child Development, etc. These are highly desirable to many of your potential families in care.
8. Transportation – Transporting children demands the highest level of safety and responsibility to ensure the well-being of all children in care. Prior to offering transportation services, the Department recommends taking our Transportation Safety course which provides information and best practices designed to help keep children safe while passengers in child care program vehicles. To access this course, go to <https://www.myfilfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/> and select “Training & Credentialing.”

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 online application and the Clearinghouse background screening.

If you need additional assistance, please call: The Department of Children and Families Child Care Program Office at **(850) 488-4900**.