

HOMES FAQ

These are questions that we have received on our "Contact Us" e-mail. If you have a question, it is quite likely that someone else has the same one, so please don't hesitate to ask us. We will update this page regularly in order to share the information. If you have a question, please feel free to hit the "Contact Us" button on the website and it will be answered quickly and then added to this area on the following update.

Thanks, and as always, please feel free to e-mail or call us anytime with any questions or concerns you may have!

Note: Answers were correct in the timeframe they were posed. Information and regulation are subject to change, so please check back or call for updates. We will attempt to take outdated information off of this FAQ section on a timely basis.

**Please click on one of the sections below to pull up
FAQS on that topic.**

Questions on Becoming Licensed
Questions on Background Screening
Questions on Fines
Questions on Substitutes
Questions on Employees
Questions on CPR/First Aid Certification
Questions on Training
Questions on Supervision Issues
Questions on Child Records/All Other Form
Questions on Medications
Questions on Fire Safety
Questions on Indoor Space
Questions on Outdoor Space
Questions on Pools
Questions on Napping/Cribs
Questions on Transporting Children
Questions on Snacks and Meals
Questions on Discipline
Questions on Animals
Questions on Miscellaneous

Questions on Becoming Licensed:

Question:

I am interested in opening a home daycare. Please send me the starter packet.

Answer:

All the documents are downloadable from our website. They are under the sections, "thank you for your interest in a family child care home". We can mail you a packet if you are unable to print it from our web site.

Question:

My concern: I currently reside in an apartment complex, and reading and studying the rules and requirements of a family child care home, am I not eligible to become a licensed or registered facility since I do not have private outdoor play space and fencing? My apartment home has several large areas for indoor play space, but no outside play areas.

I would only be caring for infants, from birth through 16 months of age as I am currently pregnant with my first child and will be taking care of him/her. The licensing would allow me to have 3 children in my care, not including my own child. Do you still require 50 sq. ft. of outdoor play space for each child if I only care for infants?

Answer:

You are correct that if you do not have an appropriate sized outdoor play area for the child care children, then you are unable to be licensed. All children, including infants, are required to have outdoor time with weather permitting. Further, the outdoor space would need to be used for childcare only when children are in care, and unfortunately there is no way to guarantee that on a shared outdoor space.

Follow up Question from Previous Question:

Thank you for your prompt response to my question. I now know that I can not be licensed, but does the outdoor play space requirement also negate my ability to be a registered home?

Answer:

In Pinellas County we license child care homes. We do not have the option of registering homes in lieu of licensing them.

Question:

If I have my CDA and have a family child day care do I have to go large?

Answer:

You do not need to change to a Large Family Home unless you would like to do so. You would need to meet some other requirements as well, such as square footage, time licensed, compliances for past 2 years. Your licensing specialist will be glad to assist you with any further question that you might have.

Questions on Background Screening:

Question:

I have a general question regarding the PCLB Licensing Standards. I know it is a requirement for us to conduct a Level 2 Background Screening on all new hires and renewals and on all current employees every 5 years. Are consultants or contractors who are in continuous and constant contact with the children and families required to undergo a Level 2 Background Screening as well?

Answer:

Yes. The new background screening requirements state that anyone who is not a volunteer, volunteering less than 10 hours per month, parents of children, or students who observe for coursework on an intermittent basis must be level 2 screened.

Question:

I have heard a few providers make the statement that they are being told that at their 5 year screening they have to go out and get the Live Scan fingerprinting done. Once the fingerprints are on file there should be no need to redo them. The live scan should be only for NEW providers, NEW subs and NEW employees ... or children that turn 18 in the home.

Can you please verify that I am correct or tell me the reason that a person who has fingerprints on file and has not left their job for more then the required time frame allowed would have to do this? I do know that there is an added cost to the FBI background checks.

Answer:

If you visit the DCF background clearance website at www.dcf.state.fl.us/admin/backgroundscreening you will see that the state law has changed as of August 1, 2010. Now, anyone who has a five year screening due must be fingerprinted by Live Scan, rather than the old fingerprint cards. The reason for the re-screening every five years is to make sure that the person has not been arrested after the initial screening.

The FDLE background form (Attachment 3 on our website) is now only for those between 12 and 18 years of age. Once they turn 18, they will need to be fingerprinted, etc. This information was provided on a PCLB mailing dated July 12, 2010. There are Live Scan locations on our website under fingerprinting, and also on the DCF background screening website. Each Live Scan vendor sets their own fees.

Questions on Fines:

Question:

We received a fine and need to know if we will receive a bill for this fine.

Answer:

No bill is sent. The Rule of Procedure for Hearing that are given with the fine outline the procedure. The Rule of Procedure for Hearing can also be found on our website home page under Quick Links on the right hand side.

The address to remit the payment to is:

Child Care Licensing Program

Florida Department of Health
4175 East Bay Drive, Suite 350
Clearwater, FL 33754

Questions on Substitutes:

Questions on Employees:

Questions on CPR/First Aid Certification:

Question:

Do you accept the online First Aid and CPR programs?

Answer:

We accept online First Aid Courses. Currently, we accept online CPR courses as long as there is an in person classroom, instructor based assessment required to complete the course. The First Aid and CPR courses have to include infants and children. We do not know of an online CPR course with the in person assessment in our area as this is a newly accepted procedure.

Questions on Training:

Questions on Supervision Issues:

Question:

I have read through the new 2010 regulations book and I don't see anything about supervision of our own children. Maybe it's there and I overlooked it. Is licensing still requiring that our children have to be supervised like the day care children, or is their supervision being left to our discretion? Also, can our children over 13 years old have their friends over to the house and not put us over our numbers and out of compliance?

Answer:

Please look at page 17 of the regulations I.C. (1) (c) that states that household children under 13 years of age must be supervised in compliance with the regulations.

All children **under the age of 13 years** in the home during operating hours are counted as being under the provider's care and therefore included in the capacity numbers.

Questions on Child Records/All Other Forms:

Question:

In the packet that was sent out to family child care providers there were forms provided at the end. Many of those forms state at the top that they are the forms for CENTERS not homes, while there are correct forms available on the web site for family child care providers. It would be helpful to providers to have correct forms sent out to them when a mailing is done. Many providers think that they MUST use these forms now that they have been provided to them. Can you inform us if you are requiring providers to use the form if they don't want to? Florida Administrative Code does not require that a form be used only that the operator ensures they are in compliance.

(s) All parts of the home, both indoors and outdoors; including the furnishings, equipment, and plumbing shall be kept clean, and sanitary, free from hazards, in an orderly condition and in good repair at all times.

1. It is the responsibility of the director/operator to ensure all areas of the facility are free from fire hazards such as lint and dust build up in heating and air vents, filters, exhaust fans, ceiling fans, and dryer vents.

It is unclear to providers as to why PCLB takes the time to make up 2 forms one for inside and one for outside when DCF has just one form to use, which covers both areas. The one DCF uses also seems a little bit nicer and user friendly. Is there a reason PCLB does not use their forms?

When administrative code at state level is written that a form must be used and we change it does it mean we are still in compliance with the code and meet DCF's requirements?

Again, it is not a requirement by DCF to document these things on the form; they are only a tool to help them remember to check.

Answer:

We apologize for any inconvenience and we will try to avoid sending home forms to centers and vice versa. The forms are marked as sample when they are not required. They are there for the providers' convenience; a provider is allowed to use their own system. However, since we receive numerous requests for sample forms we make them available to all and not just those who request them. If a form is required it is marked and stated as such.

Question:

Can we order the accident and incident report forms? We do not have any on file and would like some just in case. I believe they are carbon copy?

Answer:

We do not have carbon copy accident/incident report forms. We do have a sample accident/incident form on our website, www.pclb.org. Perhaps an office supply or printing business could assist you in turning it into a carbon copy form.

Questions on Medications:

Questions on Fire Safety:

Question:

I am wondering if you have a name of a location that I can take my extinguisher to be inspected. Normally I have a company called "Rescue One" come out to my childcare home and inspect it, but they have become so expensive.

I appreciate any help or direction you can give me.

Answer:

If you call your local fire department, they will be able to refer you to vendors in your area.

Questions on Indoor Space:

Question:

I have heard that the outlets that come on some ceiling fans need to have safety plugs in them. Is that true?

Answer: No. Ceiling fans that have outlets on them do not need to have safety plugs as the ceiling fan is inaccessible to children by design.

Questions on Outdoor Space:

Questions on Pools:

Questions on Napping/Cribs:

Questions on Transporting Children:

Questions on Snacks and Meals:

Questions on Discipline:

Questions on Animals:

Question:

What are the regulations regarding dogs? My baby sitter is WONDERFUL, but I just found out she has a large dog. I knew she had a dog but I thought it was in a fenced in area. I saw it for the first time and am not happy with the breed. I am not comfortable with it and wanted to know if I can find somewhere without animals or if that is not something I can expect from a home daycare.

Realizing there might not be common sense breed regulations got me thinking... Are they allowed to have guns in the house? I would not want my child in a house with guns, but assumed anyone licensed would not have them. I never thought to ask. There are many things I did not ask because I assumed licensed daycares would be extremely safe.

Answer:

Please go to our webpage at <http://www.pinellashealth.org/PCLB/PDFfiles/F-REGULATION MANUAL KEYED MAY 2010.pdf>

You can find all the regulations specifically regarding these and other issues. However, I can generalize for you here as well.

Child cares homes are allowed to have dogs and other pets, however, the parents have to be notified in writing that they are on the property. The animals must be current on their shots. They cannot have any animal banned by local codes or number of animals that exceeds local zoning. That is determined by their city. Any dog or animal that has been labeled as dangerous by animal control cannot be on the property.

Guns are also allowed in child care homes. However, they have to be inaccessible to children, and the ammunition has to be stored separately and also inaccessible. If the guns are in sight, for example in a gun cabinet, they must be locked.

Some centers do have animals. They would also need to provide written notice to parents of any animals that are on the premises, and the animals would also need to be up to date on shots and not labeled as dangerous. Guns are never allowed in child care centers, unless a police officer or someone else required to carry one is on the premises picking up a child or responding for their job.

Please also note that all centers and homes that are licensed as is required by law in Pinellas County, have files that are kept in our office and the public is always welcome to make an appointment to see a file. Their inspections are also available for viewing on our website.

Questions on Miscellaneous:

Question:

I am trying to find out information about licensed home day care centers in my area of Clearwater. We are looking for someone to take care of my granddaughter a few hours a day. Is there such a list available and if so, please direct me on how to find the information.

Answer:

If you go to www.pclb.org you can find providers and read their previous inspections on line. You can also just connect to the following link: <https://dcfsanswrite.state.fl.us/pinellaspublic/>

You can enter the zip code for the area you are looking for. Homes and centers are listed on this site. If you have any further questions, please let us know.

You can also look at listings on Coordinated Child Care's web site located at www.childcarepinellas.org and look at locating child care and fine Child Care Resource and Referral for free referral services.