

Parent Guide
to
Child Development Home
Registration

Introduction

Iowa uses a system for regulation of child development homes known as registration. When applying for registration providers self-certify that they meet the minimum requirements for registration. After a provider's application has been reviewed and background checks have been completed a DHS staff member will complete an on-site pre-inspection visit to verify essential health and safety requirements. The requirements listed in this document apply to registered child development homes. Iowa law limits the number of children a home may care for. A nonregistered child care home may care for up to five children. The number of children a child development home may care for varies based on the category of registration, number of providers present, and square footage of the child care space.

In issuing a registration certificate, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is stating that the provider has certified in writing that the provider will comply with the state regulations in all areas of child development home operation and that the provider has successfully completed the pre-inspection process. The Department of Human Services is required to complete an annual monitoring visit to all child development homes. However, responsibility for making sure the requirements are met also rest with the provider, the parents of children attending that child development home, and the community.

All child development home providers have certified to DHS that their child development home meets all of the requirements described here. (These requirements come from 441 Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 110.) Providers must display their *Certificate of Registration* in a conspicuous place. You may review the registration file on a child development home by making arrangements with the local DHS office. This information is also available online at https://secureapp.dhs.state.ia.us/dhs_titan_public/ChildCare/ComplianceReport.

If you have good reason to believe a child development home does not meet these requirements, please report the problem to the Iowa Child Care Complaint Hotline at 1-844-786-1296. Your verbal or written report should include the name and address of the home and each specific requirement you believe is not being met. A staff person from DHS will investigate concerns related to violations of the required standards.

Number of children. The number of children allowed under each category is shown in the following chart.

For all categories, a provider's own infant and preschool-age children **are** counted in the total, but the provider's own children who are attending school **are not** counted.

**Number of Children Allowed in
Registered Child Development Homes and Child Care Homes**

Category	Maximum Capacity	Number Restrictions	Age Restrictions	FAQ
Category A	6 children at any one time plus 2 school age children present for less than two hours at a time TOTAL 8	The 2 school aged children may not be present for more than 2 hours at a time	No more than 4 children may be under the age of 24 months at any one time Of those 4, only 3 children may be under 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assistant does not increase the number for maximum capacity. • Can have multiple sets of school aged children if present at separate times for the 2 that exceed the capacity of 6. • All 6 children at one time can be school aged.
Category B	6 children at any one time plus 4 school aged children plus 2 part time children TOTAL 12	Only 2 part time children at one time for up to 180 hours per month	No more than 4 children may be under the age of 24 months at any one time Of those 4, only 3 children may be under 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use 180 part time hours per month to exceed their maximum preschool or school age capacity. Must document the use of part time hours. • Must have an assistant if caring for more than 8 children for more than 2 hours at a time. • The total number of children authorized for the child development home shall be limited by the amount of space available per child which is 35 square feet of floor space per child. This number may be less than the maximum capacity.
Category C1	8 children at any one time TOTAL 8	May never exceed 8 children	No more than 4 children may be under the age of 24 months at any one time Of those 4, only 3 children may be under 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use an assistant but does not increase the number for maximum capacity. • The total number of children authorized for the child development home shall be limited by the amount of space available per child which is 35 square feet of floor space per child. This number may be less than the maximum capacity.

Category	Maximum Capacity	Number Restrictions	Age Restrictions	FAQ
Category C2	12 children at any one time plus 2 school age children for less than 2 hours plus 2 part time TOTAL 16	The 2 school aged children may not be present for more than 2 hours at a time Only 2 part time children at one time for up to 180 hours per month	No more than 4 children may be under the age of 24 months at any one time If those 4 children are age 18 months or under, both providers must be present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use 180 part time hours per month to exceed their maximum preschool or school age capacity. Must document the use of part time hours. • The total number of children authorized for the child development home shall be limited by the amount of space available per child which is 35 square feet of floor space per child. This number may be less than the maximum capacity. • If more than 8 children are present, both providers shall be present.
In-Home	N/A	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not care provided in the child care provider's home but provided within the child's own home. • If receiving CCA assistance, there must be a minimum of 3 eligible children. • Shall only be children within the same family.
Child Care Home	TOTAL 5	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 5 children may be present. • Child Care Homes are not registered but may receive CCA funding.

Facility and provider requirements vary, based on the category of home. The following chart outlines the facility, provider, and training requirements for child development homes.

Child Development Home Facility, Provider, and Training Requirements			
Category	Facility Requirements	Provider Qualifications	Training Requirements
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No smoking ◆ Fire extinguisher ◆ Smoke detectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 18 years old ◆ 3 reference letters 	<p>Before becoming registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mandatory reporter training ◆ First aid and CPR ◆ Minimum health and safety trainings (preservice) <p>During the two year registration period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Minimum of 24 hours of approved training
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No smoking ◆ 35 square feet per child indoors ◆ 50 square feet of child space outdoors ◆ Quiet area for sick children ◆ Fire safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire extinguisher • Smoke detectors • Two direct exits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 20 years old ◆ High school diploma or GED ◆ Has either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two years experience working directly with children in child care, or • CDA or 2- or 4-year degree in child care related field AND 1 year of experience working directly with children in child care 	<p>Before becoming registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mandatory reporter training ◆ First aid and CPR ◆ Minimum health and safety trainings (preservice) <p>During the two year registration period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Minimum of 24 hours of approved training
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No smoking ◆ 35 square feet per child indoors ◆ 50 square feet of child space outdoors ◆ Quiet area for sick children ◆ Fire safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire extinguisher • Smoke detectors • Two direct exits 	<p>One provider who meets these qualifications must always be present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 21 years old ◆ High school diploma or GED ◆ Has either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five years experience working directly with children in child care • CDA or 2- or 4-year child care related degree AND 4 years experience directly with children in child care <p>The co-provider shall meet the qualifications of a Category B provider.</p>	<p>Before becoming registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mandatory reporter training ◆ First aid and CPR <p>During the two year registration period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Minimum of 24 hours of approved training

Child Development Home Staff

The child development home provider must:

- ◆ Give careful supervision at all times.
- ◆ Give consistent, dependable care and be capable of handling emergencies.
- ◆ Frequently exchange information with the parent of each child to enhance the quality of care.
- ◆ Be present at all times. If an emergency occurs or an absence is planned, DHS-approved substitute care shall be provided. When an absence is planned, the parents shall be given at least 24 hours' prior notice.
- ◆ Not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs that could impair the provider's ability to give careful supervision.

Record checks. DHS submits record checks for:

- ◆ Every operator of a child development home.
- ◆ All staff members with direct responsibility for child care, including substitutes.
- ◆ Anyone 14 years and older who is living in the child development home.
- ◆ Anyone who might have access to a child when the child is alone.

The purpose of the record checks is to determine whether the person has any founded child abuse reports, has any criminal convictions, or is on the sex offender registry.

If the record check shows that a person has any of the following criminal conviction or abuse records, that person cannot be registered as a child development home provider, work or live in a child development home, receive public funding for providing child care, or live in a home that receives public funding for providing child care.

- ◆ Founded child or dependent abuse that was determined to be sexual abuse.
- ◆ Placement on a state or national sex offender registry.
- ◆ Felony convictions of the following:
 - Child endangerment or neglect or abandonment of a dependent person
 - Domestic abuse
 - Forcible felony
 - Crime against a child, including but not limited to, sexual exploitation of a minor
 - Arson
- ◆ Misdemeanor convictions of the following:
 - Child abuse
 - Child endangerment
 - Sexual assault
 - Child pornography

If the record check shows that the person has any of the following criminal conviction or abuse records, that person cannot be registered as a child development home provider, work or live in a child development home, receive public funding for providing child care, or live in a home that receives public funding for providing child care for a period of five years from the date of the conviction or abuse report.

- ◆ Conviction of controlled substance offense.
- ◆ Founded child abuse that was determined to be physical abuse.

If the record check shows a criminal conviction or founded child abuse report for convictions other than those listed above, the Department sends that person a *Record Check Evaluation* form. On this form, the person explains the nature of the incident, changes the person has made since the incident, and why the person should be approved in spite of the incident. After reviewing the *Record Check Evaluation* form, DHS determines if the person can be registered or live in a registered home.

In the evaluation, the Department considers:

- ◆ The nature and seriousness of the crime or abuse in relation to the position sought.
- ◆ The time elapsed since the commission of the crime or founded abuse.
- ◆ The circumstances under which the crime or founded abuse was committed.
- ◆ The degree of rehabilitation.
- ◆ The number of crimes or founded abuses committed by the person involved.

Assistants. Depending on the number of children in care, the provider may be required to have an assistant. The minimum age requirement for the assistant varies, depending on the category of child development home (please refer to chart on “Number of Children Allowed in Care”). The purpose of the assistant is to help the provider, not to substitute for the provider. The assistant may never be left alone with the children. Ultimate responsibility for supervision of the children is with the child care provider.

Substitutes. The child care provider shall assume responsibility for providing adequate and appropriate supervision at all times when children are in attendance. Ultimate responsibility for supervision is with the child care provider. Substitute providers must be 18 years of age or older. All child development home regulations regarding supervision and care of children apply to substitutes. Any substitute provider shall have the same responsibility for providing adequate and appropriate supervision.

Except in emergency situations, the child care provider shall inform parents in advance of the planned use of a substitute provider.

Substitute care may be used in the home up to 25 child care hours per month and for an additional period of up to two weeks in a 12-month period. This limit applies to the child development home, regardless of the number of persons who may be providing the substitute care. The provider shall maintain a written record of the number of hours substitute care was provided, including the date and the name of the substitute provider.

Child Development Home Program Standards

A child development home must be located in a single-family residence that is owned, rented, or leased by the person or, for dual registrations, by at least one of the persons named on the child development home's certificate of registration. This may include an apartment, condo, or townhouse.

Activity program. There is an activity program which promotes self-esteem and exploration and includes:

- ◆ Active play.
- ◆ Quiet play.
- ◆ Activities for large muscle development.
- ◆ Activities for small muscle development.
- ◆ Play equipment and materials in a safe condition, for both indoor and outdoor activities which are developmentally appropriate for the ages and number of children present.

Children's files. All of the following information must be in your child's individual file on the first day your child attends child care:

- ◆ The child's name, birth date, parent's name, address, telephone number, special needs, and your work address and telephone number.
- ◆ A list signed by you which gives the name, telephone number, and relationship of all persons authorized to pick up your child.
- ◆ Emergency information including where you can be reached; the name, street address, city, and telephone number of the child's regular source of health care; and the name, telephone number, and relationship to the child of another adult available in case of emergency.
- ◆ A signed medical consent from your authorizing emergency treatment.
- ◆ For each infant and preschool-age child, an admission physical examination report signed by a licensed physician that includes past health history, status of present health, allergies and restrictive conditions, and recommendations for continuing care when necessary. (A statement of health condition signed by a physician or designee must be given annually after the date of the admission physical.)
- ◆ For each school-age child, a statement of health status signed by the parent or legal guardian.
- ◆ A signed and dated immunization certificate provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health. (For a school-age child, a copy of the most recent immunization record is acceptable.)

The file must also include written permission from you for your child to attend activities away from the child development home. The permission must include times for departure and arrival, destination, and the names of persons who will be responsible for the child.

Health and safety. Conditions in the home are safe, sanitary, and free of hazards. This includes:

- ◆ A non-pay, working telephone with emergency numbers posted, and numbers for each child's parents, a responsible person who can be reached when the parent is unavailable, and the child's physician. A cell phone may be used as the primary phone.
- ◆ All medicines and poisonous, toxic, or otherwise unsafe materials secured from access by a child.
- ◆ First aid supplies available.
- ◆ Medicines given only with parent's or doctor's written authorization.
- ◆ All accessible electrical outlets safely capped and electrical cords properly used (not running cords under rugs, over hoods, through door openings, or other use that has been known to be hazardous).
- ◆ A safety barrier surrounding any heating stove or heating element, and combustible materials kept away from furnaces, stoves, or water heaters.
- ◆ Safety gates at stairways and doors provided and used as needed.
- ◆ A safe outdoor play area maintained in good condition, fenced when necessary, with both sunshine and shade areas.
- ◆ Emergency procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lockdown, communication, and reunification with families, continuity of operations and how to address the needs of individual children during emergency procedures.
- ◆ Fire and tornado emergency plans must be posted by all exits, and monthly fire and tornado drills should be done with the children.
- ◆ Private sewer systems must be in compliance with discharge restrictions in 567 Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 69 and discharge of untreated waste water from private sewage disposal systems is prohibited.
- ◆ Parents should be informed of any pets in the home. Cats and dogs must have current immunizations and animal waste shall be disposed of properly. Animals are not allowed in food preparation areas while food is being prepared or served.
- ◆ Pools fenced or covered. Wading pools drained daily and inaccessible to children when not in use.
- ◆ If children are allowed to use swimming pools, written permission from parents on file, rescue equipment available, and provider accompanies and supervises the children during water activities.
- ◆ Safe sleep practices as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics must be followed. This includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:
 - Infants must be placed on their backs for sleep.
 - Infants cannot sleep in or on a bed, sofa, car seat, swing, bouncy seat or other items not designed for sleeping.
 - No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets or loose bedding in the sleeping area with the infant.
- ◆ Smoking and the use of tobacco products prohibited at all times in the home and in every vehicle in which children receiving care in the home are transported. Nonsmoking signs posted at every entrance of the home and in every vehicle used to transport children.

- ◆ Smoking and the use of tobacco products prohibited in the outdoor play area during the hours of operation.
- ◆ Home built before 1960 inspected for lead-based paint hazards and hazards repaired in accordance with Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa Department of Human Services rules.
- ◆ Parents informed about any pets in the home.
- ◆ Written policies regarding the care of mildly ill children and exclusion of children due to illness.
- ◆ Written policy and procedures for responding to health-related emergencies.
- ◆ All injuries will be documented that require first aid or medical care using an injury report form. The form must be completed on the date of occurrence, shared with the parent, and maintained in the child's file.
- ◆ Any driver transporting children needs to have a valid driver's license, motor vehicle insurance, and use appropriate child restraint devices.

Meals. This includes:

- ◆ Regular meals and midmorning or midafternoon snacks shall be provided. The meals and snacks must be well-balanced, nourishing, and in appropriate amounts.
- ◆ Children may bring food to the child development home for their own consumption, but may not be required to provide their own food.
- ◆ Clean, sanitary drinking water must be readily available to children in indoor and outdoor areas throughout the day.

Discipline. Discipline practices must:

- ◆ Be designed to help the child develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others.
- ◆ Not use corporal punishment, including spanking, shaking, and slapping.
- ◆ Not use punishment that is humiliating or frightening or that causes pain or discomfort to the child.
- ◆ Not use punishment because of a child's illness or because of progress or lack of progress in toilet training, nor shall punishment or threat of punishment be associated with food or rest.
- ◆ Not subject a child to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.