

## PARENT GUIDE TO 4-LEVEL CHILD CARE HOME REGISTRATION

Iowa uses a system for regulation of child-care homes known as registration. Providers self-certify that they meet the minimum requirements for registration. Registration is voluntary for providers caring for six children or less.

All registered child care providers have certified to the Department of Human Services that their child care home meets all of the requirements described here. These requirements come from Department rules (441 Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 110).

In issuing a registration certificate, the Department is stating that the provider has certified in writing that the home meets the minimum requirements will comply with them in all areas of child-care home operation. Responsibility for making sure the requirements are met rests primarily with the provider, the parents of children attending that child care home, and the community.

Providers must display their *Certificate of Registration* in a conspicuous place. You may review the open registration file on a registered child-care home by making arrangements with the county office of the Department of Human Services.

This guide explains the minimum requirements. If you have reason to believe that a child-care home does not meet these requirements, please report the problem to the county office of the Department of Human Services. 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 the Department will contact the child-care home to investigate.

**Provider.** The provider must:

- ◆ Give careful supervision at all times.
- ◆ Frequently exchange information with the parent of each child.
- ◆ Give consistent, dependable care and be capable of handling emergencies.
- ◆ Be present at all times, except if emergencies occur or when an absence is planned. At those times good substitute care shall be provided. When an absence is planned, the provider shall give parents at least 24 hours' prior notice.

**Provider's file.** A provider must maintain a file that contains:

- ◆ A physician's signed statement that all members of the provider's household that may be present when children are in the home are free of diseases or disabilities that would prevent good child care. This statement must be obtained at the time of the first registration and at least every three years thereafter.
- ◆ Certification of two hours of training relating to the identification and reporting of child abuse.
- ◆ Certification of current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training.
- ◆ Proof of additional training taken.

**Number of children.** The provider shall receive no greater number of children for care at any one time than the number authorized on the registration certificate. The number of children allowed under each category is shown in the following chart. For all categories, a provider’s own preschool-aged children **are** counted in the total, but the school-aged children **are not** counted.

<b>FOUR-LEVEL CHILD CARE HOME REGISTRATION</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN ALLOWED IN CARE</b>				
	<b>LEVEL I</b>	<b>LEVEL II</b>	<b>LEVEL III</b>	<b>LEVEL IV</b>
<b>Maximum number of infants (under 24 months) in care at any one time</b>	3	3	3	4
<b>Total number of children under school age, including infants</b>	6	6	6	12
<b>School-aged children</b>	2 for less than 2 hours at a time	4 for less than 2 hours at a time	4 Can be full time in child care when no school. Assistant required if more than 8 children are present for more than 2 hours at a time.	2 for less than 2 hours at a time
<b>Additional part-time children*</b>	0	2 at any one time*	2 at any one time*	2 at any one time*
<b>Maximum capacity</b>	8	12	12	16 If more than 8 are present, must have second person present who meets individual qualifications for registration.
<b>Maximum capacity during inclement weather</b>	8	12 If more than 8 are present, must have assistant at least 14 years old.	12 If more than 8 are present, must have assistant at least 14 years old.	16 If more than 8 are present, must have assistant at least 18 years old.

\* Maximum number of hours care may be provided for all part-time children combined = 180 hours per month.

**Facility requirements.** Level II child-care homes must provide a minimum of 35 square feet of indoor child-use floor space for each child in care.

Levels III and IV child-care homes must meet the following requirements:

- ◆ A minimum of 35 square feet of indoor child-use floor space for each child in care.
- ◆ A separate quiet area for sick children.
- ◆ Not less than one 2A-10BC-rated fire extinguisher located in a visible and readily accessible place on each child-occupied floor.
- ◆ A minimum of one single-station, battery-operated, UL-approved smoke detector in each child-occupied room and at the top of every stairway.
- ◆ A minimum of two direct exits to the outside from the main floor. Both a child-occupied second-story and a child-occupied basement shall have in addition to one inside stairway at least one direct exit to the outside. All exits shall terminate at grade level with permanent steps. Occupancy above the second floor is not permitted for child care.

A basement window may be used as an exit if the window may be opened from the inside without the use of tools and it provides a clear opening of not less than 20 inches in width, 24 inches in height, and 5.7 square feet in area. The bottom of the opening shall be not more than 44 inches above the floor, with permanent steps inside leading up to the window.

**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 and special needs, and your name, address, telephone number, work address and telephone number.
- ◆ A list signed by you giving the name, telephone number, and relationship of all people 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 you authorizing emergency treatment.
- ◆ For each preschool-aged 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 continued care when necessary. (You must give a statement of health condition signed by a physician or designee annually after the date of the admission physical.)
- ◆ For each school-aged child, documentation of a physical examination that was completed at the time of school enrollment or since.
- ◆ A signed and dated immunization card provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health. (For the 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 care home. The permission must include times of 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.
- ◆ All medicines and poisonous, toxic, or otherwise unsafe materials secured from access by a child.
- ◆ Available first aid supplies.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ A safety barrier at stairways for preschool children and special needs children.
- ◆ A safe outdoor play area maintained in good condition, fenced when necessary, with both sunshine and shade areas.
- ◆ Fire or tornado emergency plans posted by all exits, with documented monthly fire and tornado drills.
- ◆ Annual laboratory analysis of a private water supply.

**Activity program.** The provider must have an activity program that 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 that are developmentally appropriate for the ages and number of children present.

**Meals.** Regular meals and midmorning and midafternoon snacks shall be provided which are well-balanced, nourishing, and in appropriate amounts. Children may bring food to the day care for their own use, but may not be required to provide their own food.

**Discipline.** Discipline shall conform to the following standards:

- ◆ Corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, and slapping shall not be used.
- ◆ Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or which causes pain or discomfort to the child shall not be used.
- ◆ Punishment shall not be administered because of a child's illness, or progress or lack of progress in toilet training, nor shall punishment or threat of punishment be associated with food or rest.
- ◆ No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.
- ◆ Discipline shall be designed to help the child develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others.