



Start Licensed Child Care **Group License**

Caring for up to 30 children in a home or facility





Start a Child Care Business with a Group License


This is your “one-stop guide” for starting a licensed group child care business in North Dakota* – from making your first connection with county social services to preparing for the licensor’s final inspection. Let’s get started.

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**NOTE: Some communities have child care licensing standards in addition to the state regulations outlined in this guide. Contact your county child care licensor to verify community-specific requirements.*

We Can Walk You Step-by-Step Through The Start-Up Process

Contact a Child Care Aware® Start-Up Consultant for more information.

 800-997-8515

 StartChildCare@ndchildcare.org

 www.ndchildcare.org

Consider These Things Before You Start

Opening and operating a group child care business requires careful consideration and planning. Before you make your final decision, think about the following.

Do you fit the part?

Successful child care providers use the following words to describe themselves. Can you see yourself “fitting the part?”

- Energetic - Providers typically work 10 hours a day with few breaks. Do you have the physical and emotional strength to keep up with children?
- Organized - Child care providers inherently become experts at multi-tasking as they juggle the responsibilities of talking with parents, nurturing children, preparing nutritious meals, keeping play areas clean and organized and more.
- Committed - Families depend on child care providers so they can work. Children depend on providers to care and nurture them. Do you have the ability and desire to be reliable to children and families?
- Able to communicate - The number one reason families leave a provider stems from misunderstandings and a lack of communication. Providers must be willing to reach out to families to build strong relationships.

Will it impact your family if you choose to operate a child care business in your home?

There may be a significant impact on your family if you choose to operate a group child care business in your home. You may want to discuss the following items with your family.

- Will your children adapt to sharing their parent, toys, and home with other children?
- Will the morning drop-off rush interfere with your family’s morning schedule?
- Can the family pet be integrated into the child care program?

What are the professional benefits?


Operating a licensed group child care can be personally and financially rewarding. As a licensed provider, you will

- Enjoy being your own boss
- Play a key role in your community by offering a needed service
- Support families and impact the lives of children
- Offer families peace of mind by having a regulated and inspected facility
- Qualify for tax deductions
- Allow parents a higher Child Care Assistance reimbursement



We’re Here to Help You Get Started

Child Care Aware® is here to help new child care providers through the start-up process. Contact a Child Care Aware® Early Childhood Consultant to receive support and access resources.

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How to Apply for a Group Child Care License

How many children can I care for?

Child care providers who hold a Group License can **care for up to 30 children** in a home or non-residential facility.

The total number of children who can attend at any given time is based on

- Children's ages
- Local ordinances (check with city or town)
- Staffing availability
- Square footage (minimum of 35 sq. ft. per child indoor and minimum of 75 sq. ft. per child outdoor)
- Plumbing available (minimum of 1 toilet for every 15 children who are potty trained)
- Point levels - One adult can care for children totaling 1.34 points. Each additional provider can care for children totaling 1.0 points. Note that ratios must be met and a group of children may not contain more than 4 children under the age of 18 months per provider.

CHILDREN'S AGES	POINT LEVEL
0 thru 17 months	.25 points
18 thru 35 months	.20 points
3 years	.14 points
4 years	.10 points
5 years	.08 points
6 to 12 years	.05 points

* Learn more about North Dakota child care licenses: <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childcare/info/>

STEP ONE: Contact Your County Child Care Licensor

Your county child care licensor can help you start the application process and answer your questions.

- Does my community have additional local ordinances that regulate child care?
- Where do I go to get fingerprinted? Is there a charge? Do other people need to get fingerprinted as well?
- Do I need a fire inspection?
- Do I need a health inspection?
- Where can I get CPR and first-aid training?

Connect with the child care licensor for your area by contacting your county social services office.

<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/>

How long does it take to get licensed?

Several things can impact the licensing timeline

- Your ability to complete initial paperwork
- The licensor's work load and ability to process your application
- The time you need to prepare the child care space for the licensing inspection

This licensing checklist will guide you through the process and help you complete the process faster and more efficiently.

Who will I work with to get licensed?

Your county child care licensor

- provides a list of specific state, county and local licensing requirements you must meet.
- performs the on-site inspection of your child care business to confirm that requirements are met
- oversees on-going compliance with regulations

Child Care Aware® of North Dakota consultants

- provide assistance and resources to help you meet licensing requirements
- offer on-going assistance after you are licensed



STEP TWO: Submit Licensing Paperwork

- Application to be Licensed (SFN 832)
- Fire Inspection
- Health Inspection. Ask your county child care licenser if this inspection is required for your location. If so, contact the local health department to arrange an inspection.
- Authorized Background Checks* (SFN 508)
- Fingerprint scan*. Your child care licenser can tell you where to go for fingerprinting and if there

* Other household members, child care staff or volunteers may need to be fingerprinted and receive background checks. Contact your county child care licenser to verify requirements.

is a charge for this service.

- Personal Authorization for Criminal History Background Check Inquiry* (SFN 831)
- Background Check Address Disclosure/Release of Information* (SFN 377)

STEP THREE: Prepare for the Inspection

This checklist highlights the main licensing requirements. Refer to Group Licensing Compliance Checklist (SFN 1425) to review a full listing of requirements.

Complete personnel requirements

Child care supervisor requirements:

- Meet at least one of the following
 - One year experience working in a child care with two parent references
 - Certification from a Montessori teaching program
 - Child Development Associate credential
 - Director's Credential
 - Associate degree with at least 8 semester hours or 12 quarter hours in early childhood education or child development or 120 hours of approved early childhood training
 - Bachelor's degree in the field of Early Childhood Education or Child Development
- Present in at least 60% during child care hours
- Meets staffing requirements based on the number of children present at any given time
- CPR/First Aid certified

Child care staff/volunteer requirements:

- At least 12 years of age if an immediate family member
- Has written parental permission if between ages 14 and 16 years
- Is supervised by the provider at all times if under age 18
- Receives orientation within the first week of employment
- Has completed authorized background checks
- Staff with current CPR and first-aid certification on duty at all times (substitute staff are exempt - parents are notified if a substitute who is not CPR/First Aid certified is sole care provider on duty)

Complete and organize required paperwork

Have the following documents completed and available for the licensing inspection.

- Copy of Group Rules
- Evacuation Disaster Plan (SFN 517)
- Child Care Documentation Record (SFN 343)
- Documentation of pet immunizations, if applicable
- Family/Group Child Care Facility Fire Safety Checklist (SFN 115) if applicable
- Written policies and procedures including, but not limited to
 - Guidance and discipline of the children
 - Accident and illness response procedures
 - Reporting procedure if parents or staff wish to file a complaint, suspected licensing violation, or suspected child abuse or neglect
 - Hiring practices
 - Daily reports for their child upon request
 - Accountability procedure if a child fails to arrive
 - Transportation procedures if
 - Aquatic activities policy
- Written contract notifying parents of fees and time of payment

Prepare individual files

Each child must have an individual file that includes

- Child Information Sheet (SFN 845) listing child's name, birth date, and current home address

[Prepare for the Inspection continued on page 5](#)

- Parent Statement of Health (SFN 847) listing the child's medical and health information.
- Infant Sleep Permission Form
- Certification of Immunization (SFN 16038)
- Official documentation verifying the identification of the child
- Water Activities Permission Form

Prepare your child care environment

- Plan and post meal plans
- Design a written daily schedule
- Set up a child care environment providing adequate supply of safe materials and toys for indoor/outdoor play.
- Minimum 35 sq. ft. per child of usable play space indoors
- Minimum 75 sq. ft. per child of usable play space outdoors OR 75 sq. ft. usable indoor recreational space
- Fenced-in outdoor play area
- One working smoke detector in each sleeping area and one on each level
- One working fire extinguisher on each level
- Hand soap and paper towels/individual towels available at each sink

- Hot water is 120 degrees Fahrenheit or less
- Drinking water is from an approved source
- Approved first-aid kit
- Railings or gates in place where necessary to prevent falls
- Establish napping areas
- Post signage to assure a smoke-free environment
- Bathroom (1 flushable toilet per 15 children, excluding those not toilet trained)

Schedule inspection

If you have completed all items in steps one through three, you are now ready to schedule your licensing inspection. Call your county child care licenser to schedule an inspection and complete the licensing process.

Contact a Child Care Aware® Start-Up Consultant if you have questions or want to apply for a start-up grant for your home or non-residential group child care


Establish Your New Business

These steps are not required by licensing, but they will help you launch your new child care business.

- Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) to identify a business entity: <http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/How-to-Apply-for-an-EIN%20>
- Register your business with the ND Secretary of State: <http://www.nd.gov/businessreg/>
- Establish a business checking account
- Inform a tax accountant about your new business
- Consult your insurance agent about specific insurance coverage for child care
- Establish a budget and a financial record keeping system. Minute Menu Kids Pro is a system designed especially for the child care businesses: <http://www.minutemenu.com/web/index.html>

Stay Connected

As you launch your new child care business and continue providing care, know that Child Care Aware® can assist you with virtually every aspect of your child care business.

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Documents & Forms

Find links to the state required forms referenced in this guide at <http://ndchildcare.org/start/group/>

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR LICENSING

- Application to be Licensed (SFN 832)
- Authorized Background Check (SFN 508)
- Personal Authorization for Criminal History Background Check Inquiry (SFN 831)
- Background Check Address Disclosure/Release of Information (SFN 377)
- Group License Compliance Checklist (SFN 1425)
- Evacuation Disaster Plan (SFN 517)
- Child Care Training Documentation (SFN 343)
- Family/Group Child Care Facility Fire Safety Checklist (SFN 115)
- Child Information Sheet (SFN 845)
- Parent Statement of Health (SFN 847)
- Immunization Records (SFN 16038)
- Infant Sleep Permission Form
- Daily Schedule
- Basic First-Aid Kit
- Policy
- Contract
- Aquatic Activities Policy
- Water Activities Permission Form

