



# Start Licensed Child Care **Family License**

Caring for 7 children or fewer in your home







## Start a Child Care Business with a Family License

This is your “one-stop guide” for starting a licensed family child care business in North Dakota\* – from making your first connection with county social services to preparing for the licenser’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 licenser to verify community-specific requirements.*

## We Will 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](mailto:StartChildCare@ndchildcare.org)

 [www.ndchildcare.org](http://www.ndchildcare.org)

# Consider These Things Before You Start

Opening and operating a child care business in your home 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?

Operating a child care business in your home may significantly impact your family. 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 family 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® of North Dakota guides new child care providers through the start-up process. Contact an Early Childhood Consultant to receive support and access resources.

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# Complete the Licensing Process

## How many children can I care for?

A Family License\* authorizes a child care provider to **care for 7 to 9 children, plus two additional school-age children** in their home.

## 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 your home for the licensing inspection

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

\* Learn more about North Dakota child care licenses: [http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/child care/info/](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/child%20care/info/)

## 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 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 living in my home need to get fingerprinted as well?
- Do I need a fire 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/>



## STEP TWO: Submit Licensing Paperwork

- Application to be Licensed (SFN 832)
- Fire Inspection
- Authorized Background Checks\* (SFN 508)
- Fingerprint scan\*. Your child care licensor can tell you where to go for fingerprinting and if there 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)

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

## STEP THREE: Prepare for the Inspection

This checklist highlights the main licensing requirements. Refer to [Licensing Checklist \(SFN 1422 - See page 17\)](#) to review a full listing of requirements.

### Complete personnel requirements

Child care provider requirements:

- Present in the home at least 60% during child care hours
- Meet staffing requirements based on the number of children present at any given time
- CPR/First Aid certified

Child care worker/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

### Complete and organize required paperwork

Have the following documents completed and available in one central location (e.g. a file box or drawer) to expedite the licensing inspection.

- A copy of Family 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 applicable
  - Aquatic activities policy
- Written contract notifying parents of fees and time of payment

### Prepare individual files

If a child is enrolled prior to licensing, each child must have an individual file that includes

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

### Schedule inspection

If you have completed all items in steps one through three, you are 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 need assistance.



## 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>
- 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>

As you can see, opening a child care business takes a bit of time and a lot of energy and commitment. However, your new child care business offers the opportunity to be your own boss and pursue a passion for working with children.

As you continue providing care, know that Child Care Aware® can assist you with virtually every aspect of your child care business. We invite you to stay connected!

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*Child Care Aware® of North Dakota is a program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota.*



## Documents & Forms

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

### 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)
- Family License Compliance Checklist (SFN 1422)
- 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)
- Aquatic Activities Policy
- Infant Sleep Permission Form
- Daily Schedule
- Basic First-Aid Kit
- Policy
- Contract
- Aquatic Activities Policy
- Water Activity Permission Form



