



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Dear Potential Family Day Home Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in applying for a license to operate a family day home in Virginia. As a child care provider you will have a tremendous opportunity to teach and care for young children, support your community and shape the future. But you will first want to make sure that opening a child care business is best for you and the needs of your community. Be informed and have a plan!

To help you decide if you are ready to open a family day home, consider the following:

- Do you understand the definition of a family day home?
Family day home (FDH): a child day program offered in the residence of the provider or the home of any of the children in care for one through 12 children under the age of 13, exclusive of the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, when at least one child receives care for compensation. ***Under Code of Virginia §63.2-1712, any person who operates a family day home without a license is subject to prosecution of a Class 1 misdemeanor.***
- How do you know if providing childcare is a good fit for you? Do you have?:
 - a passion for the quality care and education of children
 - the ability to provide a safe environment
 - good physical and emotional health
 - an understanding of children's developmental needs
 - patience with children and their families
 - good communication skills with staff, children, and their families
 - the ability to understand good business practices
 - good organization skills
- Have you read the *Standards for Licensed Family Day Homes* http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/fdh/intro_page/code_regulations/regulations/final_fdh_manual.pdf Are you prepared to maintain compliance with these standards?
- Do you possess at least a high school diploma or equivalent and 3 months of childcare experience?
- Are you prepared to meet the ongoing training requirements for licensure?
- Have you or any household member been convicted of a barrier crime?
http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/fdh/intro_page/background_investigations/guidance_procedures/barrier_crimes_for_child_day_programs.pdf

- Have you contacted your local zoning office to determine the number of children that your local zoning office will approve you to care for in your home?
- Are you and your household members ready to welcome state inspectors, children, parents, and other visitors into your home during business hours, sometimes unannounced?
- Are you and your household members ready to modify areas of your home inside and outside so that it is a safe environment for children in your care?
- Are you aware of the personal and financial costs involved to start-up and maintain a family day home?
- Are you aware of your responsibilities as a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect?

If you are ready to take the next step in the application process, please begin with the *Steps to Apply for an Initial Family Day Home License*.

The Division of Licensing Programs appreciates your efforts to provide childcare to families in Virginia. We look forward to working with you as you strive to provide quality childcare to families in your community! The Division of Licensing – Children’s Programs offers information on training, resources, and professional development opportunities. This information will be an invaluable resource for you and your childcare business. Please contact the VDSS licensing office in your region if you have any questions or need more information. Regional office contact information at http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/contacts/dolp_district_children.pdf
Good luck in planning your child care program.

(LOCAL OFFICE CONTACT INFO)