



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2120
RICHMOND, VA 23218-2120

Dear Potential Family Day Home Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in applying for a license to operate a family day home in Virginia. Becoming a child care provider is an exciting and rewarding career. As a family day home provider you will have a tremendous opportunity to teach and care for young children, support your community, and shape the future. The Office of Child Care Health and Safety offers information on training, resources, and professional development opportunities. This information will be a valuable resource for you and your child care business.

Before you embark on a journey into child care, consider these questions:

- ***Do you understand the definition of a licensed 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. Anyone operating a family day home for 5-12 children must be licensed. It is illegal to operate a family day home that is required to be licensed without first obtaining a license.
- ***Is 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; and
 - strong organization skills?
- ***Have you read the following regulations?*** Do you have a plan in place to ensure that you will maintain compliance with these standards?
 - *Standards for Licensed Family Day Home*
 - *General Procedures and Information for Licensure*
 - *Background Checks for Child Day Programs and Family Day Systems*
- ***Have you or any household member been convicted of a barrier crime?***
- ***Are you and your household members ready to welcome inspectors, children, parents, and other visitors into your home during business hours, often 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?* Plan carefully. Unanticipated or underestimated expenses can significantly affect your budget. Licensing requirements, such as staff training and qualifications, and equipment requirements can have a major impact on budgeting.
- *Have you considered whether you want to apply as an individual or establish a limited liability company or corporation with the Virginia State Corporation Commission for liability and tax purposes?* Applicants are encouraged to seek legal counsel to determine what is best for your program.
- *Have you looked into zoning requirements in your city or county?* Some localities have specific requirements in place related to the capacity of a home, parking requirements, employees, and more. Be sure to contact your local zoning office to discuss your plans to operate 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 visit www.childcareva.com for more information.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) appreciates your efforts to provide child care to families in Virginia. We look forward to working with you to foster a safe, high-quality care setting.

The Office of Child Care Health and Safety offers information on training, resources, and professional development opportunities. This information will be an invaluable resource for you and your child care business. Please contact the [Office of Child Care Health and Safety](#) in your region if you have any questions or need more information. Good luck in planning and launching your child care program!