

North Carolina DHHS Family Foster Home Licensure Requirements

Background Checks (Applicants and Adult Household Members):

- National Fingerprint based criminal record check (Adam Walsh Act)
- Local Court Record
- NC Department of Corrections Offender Database
- NC Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry
- Health Care Personnel Registry
- Responsible Individuals List
- Child Abuse/Neglect Clearance Letters from other states (for applicants/household members have not lived in NC for the past five years)

Medical/Mental Health Clearance:

- Applicants and all household members must receive a Medical Evaluation from a licensed medical provider. This evaluation provides documentation that there are not any physical or mental health issues that will prevent the applicants from caring for foster children.
- Foster home licensing social workers must discuss the following issues with applicants:
 - Any indication of alcohol abuse, drug abuse or illegal drug use by applicants or household members
 - Any indication that a member of the foster family is a perpetrator of domestic violence
 - Any indication that a member of the foster family has abused, neglected or exploited a disabled adult

Environmental Safety:

- The foster home must pass a fire inspection by the local fire inspector
- Environmental checklist must be completed by the foster home licensing social worker (addresses gun storage, water quality, general sanitary conditions of the home, etc)
- Exterior spaces around the home are clear of dangerous objects or hazardous items
- Foster children are provided protection from water hazards (swimming pools, ponds, lakes, etc.)
- Foster home's design allows children privacy while bathing, dressing, using toilet facilities
- The foster home is assessed to determine if there is enough space to accommodate the foster children
- Each foster child shall have his/her own bed
- Bedrooms shall not be shared by children of the opposite sex except by children age five and under
- The sleeping arrangements shall provide space within the bedroom for the bed and the child's personal possessions
- When children share a bedroom, a child under six shall not share a room with a child over 12, except when siblings are placed together
- No more than four children shall share a room
- Pets shall be assessed for safety

Foster parents must sign a Discipline Agreement that states foster children:

- Are provided training and discipline that is appropriate for the child's age, intelligence, emotional makeup, and past experience
- Are not subjected to cruel or abusive punishment
- Are not subjected to corporal punishment
- Are not deprived of a meal or contacts with family for punishment or placed in isolation time-out except when isolation time-out means the removal of a child to an unlocked room or area

from which the child is not physically prevented from leaving. The foster parent may use isolation time-out as a behavioral control measure when the foster parent provides it within hearing distance of a foster parent. The length of time alone shall be appropriate to the child's age and development

- Are not subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or humiliating remarks about himself/herself or his/her families

Training:

- 30 hours of pre-service for family foster care
- 40 hours of pre-service for therapeutic foster care
- CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions
- Medication Administration
- Physical Restraints (if used)
- 10 hours of in-service training annually

Other:

- Foster home licensing social workers must document the Family History (Information about parents and siblings; support systems; personal experiences of abuse, neglect, domestic violence, significant experiences of loss and ability to cope with loss, grief, problems, stress, frustrations, crises; education and employment history; income; marriages and other significant relationships; parenting experiences, etc.)
- Supervising agency must address 12 Skill Areas of applicants:
 1. Assessing individual and family strengths and needs and building on strengths and meeting needs
 2. Using and developing effective communication
 3. Identifying the strengths and needs of children placed in the home
 4. Building on children's strengths and meeting the needs of children placed in the home
 5. Developing partnerships with children placed in the home, parents or the guardians of the children placed in the home, the supervising agency and the community to develop and carry out plans for permanency
 6. Helping children placed in the home develop skills to manage loss and skills to form attachments
 7. Helping children placed in the home manage their behaviors
 8. Helping children placed in the home maintain and develop relationships that will keep them connected to their pasts
 9. Helping children placed in the home build on positive self-concept and positive family, cultural, and racial identity
 10. Providing a safe and healthy environment for children placed in the home which keeps them free from harm
 11. Assessing the ways in which providing family foster care or therapeutic foster care affects the family
 12. Making an informed decision regarding providing family foster care or therapeutic foster care
- Foster home licensing social worker must address Conflict of Interest requirements
 - Applicant supervised by a Public or Private child-placing agency is NOT a member of the agency board of directors, governance structure, social services board, county commission or is an agency employee or relative of an agency employee.
 - Applicant supervised by a Private child-placing agency is NOT an owner of that Private child-placing agency.