

# STATE OF TENNESSEE

## **DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

**The Office of Continuous Quality Improvement**

**Office of Child Welfare Licensing**

**UBS Tower, 7th Floor**

**315 Deaderick Street**

**Nashville, TN 37243**

Dear Prospective Provider:

Thank you for your interest in becoming licensed to provide services to children and families within the State of Tennessee. The following is a listing and brief description of the licenses issued and regulated by this office. Please click on the type of license to view a detailed description of these services as well as current licensing standards on the [DCS Child Welfare Licensing](https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/licensing.html) webpage

**Type of License: Brief Description:**

[**Child Placing Agencies**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-09.pdf) Residential Care, Foster Care and Adoptions

[**Family Boarding Homes**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-02.pdf) Residential Care serving 1-6 children/youth

[**Group Care Homes**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-02.pdf) Residential Care serving 7-12 children/youth

[**Residential Child Care Agencies**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-05.pdf) Residential Care serving in excess of 12 children/youth

[**Maternity Homes**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-07.pdf) Residential Care serving 2 or more pregnant clients

[**Juvenile Detention Centers**](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/licensing/Detention_THR_Standards.pdf) Hardware secure temporary residential care

[**Temporary Holding Resources**](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/licensing/Detention_THR_Standards.pdf) Hardware secure/non-secure temporary residential care

[**Child Abuse Prevention Agencies**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-11.pdf) Educational programs and other abuse-prevention services

[**Runaway Houses**](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0250/0250-04/0250-04-10.pdf) Temporary/emergency non-secure residential care

Please note that the issuance of a license does not guarantee a contract for services with the State of Tennessee. Services are contracted based on regional needs assessments through the DCS Office of Network Development. It is strongly recommended that any potential provider seeking to contract with the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services should contact the Director of the DCS Office of Network Development, Frank Mix, to obtain information around current service needs and other information. Mr. Mix may be reached at 615.741.9164 or [Frank.Mix@tn.gov](mailto:Frank.Mix@tn.gov).

Please read the pertinent licensing rules, review the attached charter study worksheet, research the need for the type of service you are interested in providing and contact this office to speak with a licensing consultant *prior to submitting an application*.

If you have further questions about this process, please email: [EI\_DCS.Licensing@tn.gov](mailto:EI_DCS.Licensing@tn.gov)

**DCS Licensing Consultants (by region):**

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Included In This Section:

Points of Excellence for Congregate Care Facilities

Charter Study Worksheet

# Points of Excellence

The “Points of Excellence” are the foundational requirements applied to all agencies applying for licensing under the Tennessee department of Children’s Services. These statutory requirements can be located in Tennessee Code Annotated 37-5-5 ‘Child Care Agencies’

1. **Agency program description and description of population to be served**
2. **Adequacy of the Methods of Administration and the Management of the Child Care Agency and the Financing of the Agency**
   1. Board of Directors (private, nonprofit agencies) or Advisory Board Members (public and for-profit agencies.)
      1. Names, addresses and email addresses of Board members (no more than 25% of board composition may be out-of-state members.)
      2. Occupation of board members
      3. Community affiliations of board members
   2. Agency Charter and By Laws
   3. Executive Director’s name, address, and resume.
   4. Reference letters and background checks on any corporate official having direct involvement with the agency.
   5. Proposed agency budget, showing anticipated expenses and sources of revenue.
   6. Demonstrate the capacity to operate during the initial 60 days either by providing proof of cash reserves equal to submitted operating expenses above or an available line of credit in an equal amount.
   7. Liability insurance information and surety bonding information.
   8. Registration with the [Tennessee Secretary of State](https://tnbear.tn.gov/Ecommerce/RegistrationInstr.aspx)
3. **The Present Need for the Child Care Agency**
   1. At least five (5) statements or letters attesting to the need for the service to be provided by the agency from knowledgeable individuals or agencies.

**(or)**

* 1. Copies of any contracts between the state and the agency or between agencies to provide services for children.

1. **The Capability, Training and Character of the Persons Providing or Supervising Care to the Children**
   1. Agency job descriptions and specifications.
   2. Resumes and official transcripts of required degrees on administrative and professional staff.
   3. Reference letters and background screening results on all staff.
   4. Physicals and TB test on all staff having direct contact with children.
   5. Training requirements on all staff.
   6. Agency Personnel Policies
   7. Child abuse policy (screening, reporting and training)
2. **The Quality of the Methods of Care and Instruction Provided for the Children**
   1. Intake and discharge policy
   2. Discipline Policy
   3. Physical restraint and time out room policy
   4. Search policy
   5. Education policy
   6. Visitation policy
   7. Health policy
   8. Agency staff/child ratio and level of supervision
   9. Food service procedure

1. **The Safety, Welfare and Best Interests of the Children in the Care of the Agency**
   1. Written safety program including measures to remove hazards and prevent accidents.
   2. Written vehicle safety plan for all vehicles which transport children.
   3. Written safety training program for children including any hazardous equipment, emergency preparedness and emergency evacuation procedures.
   4. Written disaster plan in the event of an extended emergency or natural disaster.
   5. Written procedures for control of communicable diseases.
2. **The Suitability of the Facilities Provided for the Care of the Children**
   1. Approved life safety inspection from state or local fire prevention authorities or the licensing consultant, as appropriate.
   2. Approved environmental safety inspection from local health authorities or the licensing consultant, as appropriate.
   3. Licensing site visit.
   4. Documentation of handicap accessibility, as appropriate.

CHARTER STUDY OUTLINE/WORKSHEET

This checklist is used to mark those points that have been covered, and those that are still pending. You may find this checklist useful when gathering the required documents.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I- Agency Program Description |  | | |
| II- Methods of Administration |  | | |
| A. Board of Directors for private/nonprofit agencies or Advisory Board for public and for-profit agencies | Email and Physical Address | Occupation | Community  Affiliations |
| 1. |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |
| 6. |  |  |  |
| 7. |  |  |  |
| 8. |  |  |  |
| 9. |  |  |  |
| 10. |  |  |  |
| B. Agency Charter and By Laws |  | | |
| C. Executive Director’s Name, address, and Resume |  | | |
| D. Reference Letters and background checks on corporate officials having direct involvement with the agency |  | | |
| E. Agency Budget |  | | |
| F. Proof of initial 60 days capacity to operate and/or line of credit |  | | |
| G. Liability Insurance and/or surety bonding information |  | | |
| H. Tennessee Secretary of State Registration |  | | |
| VI- Assessment of Need |  | | |
| A. Five statements or letters attesting to the need for the service to be provided by the agency from knowledgeable individuals or agencies |  | | |
| OR |  | | |
| B. Copies of any contracts between the state and the agency or between agencies to provide services for children |  | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **II- Personnel.** |  | | | | | | |
| A. Job Descriptions and specifications |  | | | | | | |
| B-E. \*all background checks are to be conducted in accordance with TN DCS Provider Policy.  <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/for-providers/prospective-vendors.html>  \*\* contact your licensing consultant for current TB requirements. | RESUMES | TRANSCRIPTS | REFERENCES | BACKGROUND  CHECKS\* | PHYSICALS | TB ASSESSMENT/ TEST\*\* | TRAINING OF  STAFF |
| 1. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| F. Agency Personnel Policies |  | | | | | | |
| **II- Quality of Care** |  | | | | | | |
| A. Intake and discharge policy |  | | | | | | |
| B. Discipline policy |  | | | | | | |
| C. Physical restraint & time out policy |  | | | | | | |
| D. Search policy |  | | | | | | |
| E. Education policy |  | | | | | | |
| F. Visitation policy |  | | | | | | |
| G. Health Policy |  | | | | | | |
| H. Agency Staff/child ratio and level of Supervision |  | | | | | | |
| I. Food service procedure |  | | | | | | |
| J. Child abuse policy (screening, reporting, training) |  | | | | | | |
| **III- Safety** |  | | | | | | |
| A. Safety program – hazards/accidents |  | | | | | | |
| B. Vehicle safety plan |  | | | | | | |
| C. Safety – emergency procedures |  | | | | | | |
| D. Disaster plan |  | | | | | | |
| E. Procedures for control of communicable diseases |  | | | | | | |
| **IV- Physical Plant/Facility** |  | | | | | | |
| A. Fire inspection \*contact licensing consultant |  | | | | | | |
| B. Health environmental safety inspection \*contact licensing consultant |  | | | | | | |
| C. Licensing Site Visit \*contact licensing consultant |  | | | | | | |
| D. Documentation of handicap accessibility (as appropriate) |  | | | | | | |

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