

Alabama Licensing Regulations for Family Day Care and Group Day Care Homes

In Alabama, legally operating Family Day Care Homes, Family Nighttime Homes, Group Day Care Homes and Group Nighttime Homes must have a license if they are providing care for one or more unrelated children; with or without compensation; away from the child's home; for more than four hours in a 24-hour period. The licensing authority in Alabama is the local county Department of Human Resources (DHR). The health department, the fire department and DHR inspect the home before awarding a license. Licenses are valid for 2 years and should be on display in the home. Licensing is intended to set standards for operating a child care facility. It is not a guarantee of high quality care. Parents have the right to visit the program anytime during operating hours.

Child Care Concerns and Complaints

To report a licensing concern or ask if a home you are considering has had substantiated complaints, please contact the local county Department of Human Resources in which the day care home is located.

Blount County	205-274-5200	Jefferson County	866-528-1694
Shelby County	205-669-3007	Walker County	205-387-5400

To review the complete DHR Minimum Standards for Family Day Care Homes, Family Nighttime Homes, Group Day Care Homes and Group Nighttime Homes please visit www.dhr.state.al.us or call 1-866-528-1694.

Licensee Qualifications

The licensee shall be at least 19 years of age, must have a high school diploma or G.E.D., have current CPR/First Aid training and have at least 24 hours of clock training in child care and development prior to being licensed with at least 4 hours in each of the following areas:

- (a) child development;
- (b) health, safety and universal precautions;
- (c) quality child care and licensing;
- (d) the child care professional and the family;
- (e) language development;
- (f) positive discipline and guidance.

Thereafter, the licensee shall have at least 20 clock hours of training related to child care each year.

Assistant Caregiver Qualifications

The assistant caregiver must be at least 19 years of age, have a high school diploma or G.E.D., current CPR/First Aid training and have 12 clock hours of training in child care and development within the first 30 days of employment and at least 12 clock hours annually.

Substitute Qualifications

Substitutes shall care for the children in the licensee's home. Substitutes shall be at least 19 years of age and have a high school diploma or G.E.D. and CPR/First Aid training.

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Health and Safety

Each child 2 months to lawful school age must have an Alabama Certificate of Immunization or a medical/religious exemption on file in the child care center. No child who appears ill may be admitted to the day care home. The family day care operator must report suspected illness, injury or exposure to contagious disease to the parent/guardian. No medicine may be given to a child without a written and signed authorization from the parent/guardian. All medicine must be in the original container and maintained in a locked storage. In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics, all infants under 12 months should be placed on their back to sleep, unless the infant has a note from a physician specifying otherwise. There must be a clearly posted list of emergency numbers and plans for care of children in emergency situations. The family day care operator, assistant and substitute must have a current CPR/First Aid Certification. The home and grounds must be maintained in a clean and safe condition. The outdoor play area must be enclosed by a fence or a wall. The licensee, assistants, substitute and all adult members of the household must complete a criminal background check.

Care of Children

A Family Day Care Home may care for no more than 6 unrelated children. A Group Day Care Home may care for 7 to 12 unrelated children. Whenever 7 or more children are present, at least 2 adult caregivers shall be present. If a substitute is used, either the licensee or the assistant caregiver shall be present supervising the children. The parent/guardian must sign each child in upon arrival and out upon departure every day. The parent/guardian must provide written authorization before the licensee may release the child to anyone else. Children must be supervised at all times. Feeding of infants shall be planned with the parent/guardian. Breakfast or a morning snack, a mid-day meal and one afternoon snack must be provided each day. Children should spend time outdoors each day when weather permits. A variety of age appropriate toys, games and play equipment should be available to the children. No child shall sleep or nap on the floor, upper bunk bed or water bed. Corporal/physical punishment, verbal abuse and physical restraint are prohibited.

Nighttime Care

A Family Day Care or Group Day Care Home providing care 7:00 p.m. or later is considered to offer nighttime care and shall have a nighttime license. An evening meal shall be served to a child who is continuing in attendance from the day time program. If a child is bathed, clean water, individual bar of soap, towel and washcloth shall be provided for each child. Each child should be bathed separately and be supervised while bathing. A child under 18 months of age who receives his regular nights sleep at the Nighttime Home shall sleep alone in a crib. Each child 18 months or older shall sleep in a bed. In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics, all infants under 12 months should be placed on their back to sleep, unless the infant has a note from a physician specifying otherwise. Breakfast shall be served to each child who goes directly to school, unless breakfast is provided by the school or parent.

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Questions you should ask when visiting a Family Day Care Provider

How long have you been operating a Family/Group Child Care Home?

How many children do you have enrolled?

What training have you taken this year?

How will you help my child adjust to your home?

What activities will you plan for my child?

How will you let me know about my child's day?

How do you handle behavior problems?

How do you handle medical, fire and weather emergencies?

May I drop in and visit anytime?

What happens when you are sick or on vacation?

What safety precautions do you take when children go on field trips or are transported by car or van?

What fees do you charge and when are they due?