

DCYF_LD_Group Care Licensing Process and Department Access

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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Original Date: May 19, 2025

Licensing Division | Approved for distribution by Jesse Byrd, Workforce Development and Training Administrator

WAC 110-145-2360 License application requirements

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2360 License application requirements.

- (1) To apply for a license to provide care to children and youth, applicants must:
 - (a) Be at least 21 years old;
 - (b) Submit the following completed documents to the department:
 - (i) Licensing application;
 - (ii) Background authorization forms for personnel at the GCF as outlined in chapter 110-04 WAC, including those not directly working with children;
 - (iii) A detailed written program description for department approval that includes:
 - (A) The applicant's mission and goals; and
 - (B) A description of the services the agency will provide to children, youth, and their families;
 - (iv) Agency's policies and procedures including, but not limited to, policies regarding:
 - (A) Staff qualifications;
 - (B) Staff duties;
 - (C) Ongoing training for developing personnel skills and abilities; and
 - (D) How they will meet the requirements of this chapter;
 - (v) Emergency and evacuation plans; and
 - (vi) Certificate of occupancy or equivalent approval, per WAC 110-145-2420; and
 - (c) Complete their licensing application by submitting all required documents within 90 calendar days of submitting the application and background authorization forms to the department.
- (2) If the applicant does not meet the 90-day deadline, the department may withdraw the application.
- (3) Prior to licensing:
 - (a) The department will conduct a site inspection to verify that the premises meet the requirements under this chapter; and
 - (b) All group care agencies described in this chapter must:
 - (i) Meet the health requirements and receive a certificate of compliance from DOH; and
 - (ii) Be inspected and approved by the state fire marshal when required.

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WAC 110-145-2370 Determining applicants' and licensees' suitability

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2370 Determining applicants' and licensees' suitability.

- (1) The department will determine the suitability of applicants and licensees after receiving:
 - (a) Licensing applications;
 - (b) Background authorizations for the individuals listed in WAC 110-145-2360; and
 - (c) All documentation required under this chapter.
- (2) Applicants and licensees must pass a background check, per chapter 110-04 WAC.
- (3) During the licensing process, applicants and licensees must demonstrate that they have the:
 - (a) Understanding, ability, physical health, emotional stability, and personality suited to meet the physical, mental, emotional, cultural, and social needs of the children and youth in care; and
 - (b) Ability to provide children and youth in care with a nurturing, respectful, and supportive environment regardless of the child's or youth's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, culture, or SOGIE.
- (4) During the licensing process, the department may require:
 - (a) Applicants and licensees to provide additional information at any time;
 - (b) An evaluation of the premises; or
 - (c) An evaluation of the applicant or licensee and their personnel by an evaluator recommended by the department.
- (5) When the department requires an evaluation, applicants or licensees must:
 - (a) Pay any related costs for evaluations required by the department; and
 - (b) Give written permission for the evaluator to exchange information with the department prior to and throughout the evaluation process.
- (6) The department may disqualify any individuals found to have misrepresented or provided fraudulent information.
- (7) LD licensors must complete the following before granting or renewing a license:
 - (a) Evaluate the applicants' or licensees' ability to provide a safe environment and the quality of care needed for the children and youth in care; and
 - (b) Verify that the applicants or licensees have met the training requirements.

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WAC 110-145-2380 Disqualification of applicants and licensees

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2380 Disqualification of applicants and licensees.

The department:

(1) Must:

- (a) Disqualify applicants, licensees, their personnel, or subcontractors if they do not pass a background check, per chapter 110-04 WAC; and
- (b) Notify licensees when their personnel are disqualified from having access to children and youth in care; and

(2) May take an action against a license, per WAC 110-145-3560, if a licensee or applicant:

- (a) Does not meet the regulations of this chapter;
- (b) Hires an individual disqualified by the department; or
- (c) Continues to allow an individual disqualified by the department access to children and youth in care.

WAC 110-145-2390 Determining license capacity

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2390 Determining license capacity.

- (1) The department:
 - (a) Will issue licenses that specify the licensed capacity of children and youth licensees may have placed in their GCF;
 - (b) Determines capacity by evaluating the following:
 - (i) Licensees' ability to care for children and youth;
 - (ii) Number of individuals providing care and their skills;
 - (iii) Physical accommodations of the facility;
 - (iv) The ages and needs of the children and youth who may be placed in their facility; and
 - (v) The certificate of occupancy issued by the municipality's building department, except SRHs licensed for five or fewer children or youth do not require a certificate of occupancy; and
 - (c) May issue a license with a lower capacity than the license type allows, based on their evaluation.
- (2) Licensees must not exceed the capacity on their license, unless an exception is approved by LD, per WAC 110-145-3540.
- (3) In order to be licensed to care for children younger than six years old, unless otherwise allowed by their license type, licensees must either care for:
 - (a) Children or youth:
 - (i) With developmental disabilities; or
 - (ii) That are medically fragile; or
 - (b) Pregnant or parenting youth.

WAC 110-145-2400 License renewal requirements

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2400 License renewal requirements.

Licensees must send their renewal application and all required background authorization forms to the LD licensor at least 90 calendar days prior to the expiration of the current license.

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WAC 110-145-2410 Department access to facilities

NEW SECTION

WAC 110-145-2410 Department access to facilities.

Licensees must allow the department to:

(1) Access the:

(a) Licensed premises, personnel, and children and youth in care at any time; and

(b) Documents related to the licensee's program when determining whether they are in compliance with:

(i) Chapter 26.44 RCW;

(ii) Chapter 74.15 RCW;

(iii) RCW 74.13.031; and

(iv) This chapter;

(2) Meet privately with personnel and children and youth in care at the department's request.