

1. What is approved family home day care?

Approved family home day care is day care provided by a care provider in their home that is managed by an agency licensed by the Department of Community Services.

2. Why has the government established a Family Home Day Care (FHDC) Program?

- To provide parents access to approved day care services in a home setting where care is monitored to ensure it meets established standards;
- To allow parents who are eligible for government subsidies for fees, greater access to regulated child care;
- To provide more support and options to parents who are employed or training for employment;
- To ensure that children's health, safety and well-being are protected; and
- To provide more options for family home day care providers through the support of an agency.

3. What are the benefits for families using family home day care?

- Monitored child care in areas where a child care centre is not available;
- Child care in a family setting and atmosphere;
- Convenient locations - may be close to home, school, work;
- Children of multiple ages from infants to 12 years cared for together by one provider;
- Children can have the same care provider for many years;
- Care providers meet established standards through regular monitoring;
- Parents can access government subsidies to assist with fee payment, providing they are not the care provider; and
- Flexible hours - care providers may have hours to help parents who work shifts or irregular hours.

4. Who can become a Family Home Day Care Agency?

Any business or organization that is registered with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies can apply to become a family home day care agency. For example, a private business, a licensed day care centre (profit or non-profit) or a community based non-profit organization could apply to become an agency.

5. How are approved family day care homes monitored and managed?

Family home day care homes are managed and monitored by family home day care agencies that are licensed by the Department of Community Services.

6. How do I apply to become a Family Home Day Care agency?

The application package is available at

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/FamilyHomeDayCare.html>

or you may contact a regional office of the Department of Community Services and ask for an application package to be mailed to you.

7. What are the steps to obtain a Family Home Day Care agency license?

There are two steps before a license is issued:

1. A Family Home Day Care Application Review Committee will evaluate each submitted application and proposal. The evaluation will be based on the operating budget, the program, and the need for child care in the area. The proposal may be approved or refused at this time.
2. Applicants that have their proposals approved would then work with an Early Childhood Development Officer to provide the remaining supplementary information required to obtain a license.

8. Will I receive funding if I become an agency?

If your proposal is approved you will be notified if you are approved for funding. The funding will be distributed the first business day of the month after the license is issued.

9. Can an agency be licensed and not receive funding?

Yes, an applicant who receives approval for their proposal and is advised that funding is not available or chooses to operate without the funding can continue the process and obtain a license.

10. What funding is provided to an agency?

There are two types of grants provided, the FHDC Start Up Grant and the FHDC Operating Grant. If the agency is eligible for funding, these grants are disbursed once the agency is licensed.

- The FHDC Start Up Grant amount is \$5,000. This grant will provide a one time fixed amount to be used by the agency to pay for advertising, equipment, and legal fees to set up the agency.
- The FHDC Operating Grant amount will start at **\$38,614.01** and will increase as the agency recruits more family day care homes. This is an annual grant intended to support the agency in meeting the costs of salary and benefits to agency staff, transportation, education, program material, and fixed costs. The grant will be calculated on an annual basis, and distributed in quarterly instalments.
- If the agency receives the FHDC Operating Grant, a one time allowance of **\$250.00** will also be provided for each new care provider. This funding is for the cost of the family home day care training required by the FHDC Regulations.

11. Is there a minimum number of approved homes an agency must have?

Yes, if the agency is receiving funding. A funded agency is required to have four or more family day care homes. If the agency has fewer than four approved family day care homes for a consecutive six month period, the agency must submit a plan for a three month period. The Coordinator, Family Home Day Care will work closely with

the agency and if the agency still cannot recruit four family day care homes within this plan the FHDC Operating Grant will be discontinued.

12. How often will applications to become an agency be processed?

The Department Community Services will accept, review and approve agency applications quarterly. The deadline for submission of applications will be October 1, January 1, April 1 and July 1 each year.

13. I would like to become an agency but I do not have the physical space, what do I need to do?

- You will be required to know what space you would be using for the proposal.
- This space can be a planned upgrade to a facility you already have or a rented location.
- If your proposal is approved, inspections must be done to provide evidence that the location is within the regulation standards prior to the license being issued.
- There may be other government grants available that can assist with this (for more information go to: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/ELCCProgram.html>)

14. I am already providing child care in my home. Do I have to join an agency and become regulated?

No. The Family Home Day Care Program is voluntary. However, you may wish to research the services available at an agency to family home day care providers so that you are fully aware of the benefits of being approved by an agency.

15. If I am a care provider in an approved family home day care, do I become the employee of the agency?

No, you will be self-employed. The agency will be able to provide information and direct you to resources that can help you learn and benefit from being a self-employed care provider of a family day care home.

16. What are the benefits of becoming a care provider of a family home day care in the Family Home Day Care Program?

As a care provider in an approved family day care home you will have access to:

- Program advice and support with respect to program delivery provided by agency's family home consultant;
- Professional development and training provided by the agency;
- Other care providers and family home consultants for interaction and support;
- Administrative support and assistance with record keeping;
- Early childhood education information and resources;
- A lending library provided by the agency; and
- Participation in play groups organized by the family home consultant.

Other benefits to the care provider include:

- Providing care to children whose fees may be subsidized by the Department of Community Services;
- Ability to advertise/inform parents that your home is approved and regularly monitored and that the child care meets government regulations/standards;
- Parent confidence knowing your home is an approved family home day care; and
- Community recognition as an approved family home care provider.

17. If I become an approved family day care home will the agency charge me for the services provided?

No, the agency receives government funded support to provide these services to its family day care homes. As a care provider you will keep the parent fees you collect and the agency will distribute the full government subsidies received for any children in your care.

18. As a care provider in an approved family day care home, am I able to set my own fees when I join an agency?

Yes, and it is advisable that the fees should be competitive with similar programs in the community.

19. Will the family day care homes take children who receive childcare subsidies?

Yes, families who are eligible for the subsidy program may send their children to family day care homes.

20. If am a care provider, will I be eligible for subsidy for my own children?

No, children of the care provider are not eligible for subsidy in their own home.

21. Where can I get more information about the program?

For more information, please visit the website at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/FamilyHomeDayCare.html> or contact a regional office of the Department of Community Services.

A list of offices can be found on the Department of Community Services website at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/FamilyHomeDayCare.html>

22. Are there currently any agencies and where are they located?

There are several agencies licensed at this time. Please contact your regional office of the Department of Community Services to find out if any agencies are located in your area.