



BANANAS

A bunch of support for all things child care

How to get Licensed to do Family Child Care in your Home Some Questions and Answers

What is the first step in getting licensed?

First, you must attend a licensing orientation. The Department of Social Services (DSS) Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division licenses child care programs. There are two ways to attend an orientation: 1) at an in-person meeting where a licensing analyst goes over all the information involved in getting licensed and answers participants' questions or 2) online. **Payment is required for registration.** The in-person orientations are held throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties and costs (\$25 per person **check or money order only**, payable to California DSS). Send payment, along with the date you would like to attend, to 1515 Clay St., Suite 1102, Oakland, CA 94612. If you take the orientation online, the cost is \$30 and you will have to pay by credit card. Community Care Licensing phone number is 622-2602. To find the orientation schedules go to: <http://www.cclid.ca.gov/PG534.htm>.

If you take the orientation online, be sure to check "Yes" to indicate that you would like the local Child Care Resource & Referral agency (such as BANANAS) to contact you. BANANAS can help you with the process of getting licensed and setting up your program. Join our Information Session any 4th Thursday of the month from 10-11am.

What happens at the Orientation meeting?

At the meeting, a licensing analyst will explain the licensing process. The meeting takes about three hours and DSS requests that you **do not bring children to the meeting**. During the orientation the following required forms will be discussed as well as other licensing regulations. Download forms at: <http://cclid.ca.gov/PG513.htm>

Required Forms (You will not receive a license until you complete the following forms.)

1. *Family Child Care Application Form* — To be completed at home.
2. *T.B. Test Forms* — You and anyone over age 18 who lives in the home and any assistants working in your program will have to get a T.B. test at your doctor's office or local medical clinic.
3. *Emergency Care & Disaster Action Plan Form* — You must think ahead about what you will do in an emergency and fill out this form. BANANAS has a Handout to assist you in developing your plan.
4. *Applicant Home/Yard Sketch* — Draw a sketch of your home/apartment which includes all the inside rooms and the outside grounds (show the yard area and any pools, fences, garages, etc.).
5. *Criminal Record Statement* — You and anyone over age 18 who lives in the home must sign a statement under penalty of perjury regarding their criminal history.
6. *Fingerprints & Child Abuse Index Check* — These must be completed for anyone over age 18 who lives in the home (yourself included) and any assistants working in your program. You will receive fingerprinting information after the CCL has received and accepted your application. **Don't get fingerprinted until you have received this information; you need special forms for this.**

What must I do after attending the orientation?

1. Complete the application, including your signature and your spouse's signature if s/he is to be named on the license and attended the orientation.
2. Complete a 15-hour Child Care Health and Safety course, which includes CPR and First Aid. (Ask BANANAS for a list of qualified trainers. The course must be approved and specific to child care.) If you have not completed the 15 hours by the time the rest of your application process is complete, the CCL will give you a non-renewable 90-day provisional license.
3. Check your home carefully to be sure it is in compliance with the licensing rules as they were explained at the orientation meeting. (BANANAS also has a Handout to help you check your home for safety.)
4. Get a T.B. test from your doctor or medical clinic. A list of current clinics are available on the Alameda County Public Health Department website, www.acphd.org/clinics.aspx, scroll down to and click on "TB Screening Test Sites", You can also call the Public Health Clearinghouse at (888) 604-4636.
5. If you don't already have them, buy and install smoke detectors and a fire extinguisher (2A10BC or larger). You must have both to be licensed. (Although not yet required by licensing, a law has gone into effect in 2011 requiring all homes to have a carbon monoxide detector.)
6. Mail all completed forms to Community Care Licensing, 1515 Clay St., Suite 1102, Oakland, CA 94612. There is an application fee of \$66 for a license of 6 or 8 and \$127 for a license of 12 or 14. Make copies of all completed forms before mailing. **Your application will be returned if it is not complete.**

What happens after I file the application?

If your application is complete, you will receive documents in the mail from the CCL including a letter giving you a facility number as well as fingerprinting information and Child Abuse

Index (CAI) forms. Call LiveScan at (800) 315-4507 to schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted. Your CAI forms and any necessary fees must be mailed to the Department of Justice, P.O. Box 903417, Sacramento, CA 94203.

Once you have submitted your application, a licensing evaluator will contact you within about 30 days to make an appointment to come to your home for a health and safety inspection. Be sure you have "child-proofed" your home in the ways explained at the orientation meeting. After you have received a home visit and a satisfactory evaluation, you must wait until you receive your actual license in the mail before you begin caring for children. BANANAS will need a copy of your license before we can place your name in our files. Call us at 658-7353 to make an appointment.

Can I do anything to speed up the process?

Yes, you can get your T.B. tests, your health and safety training and begin child proofing your home before you attend an orientation. As soon as you have the packet of required forms, fill them out and return them to CCL.

What if I have (or someone in my family has) a criminal conviction besides a minor traffic violation?

BE HONEST. It will slow down the licensing process, but you should never sign any statement under penalty of perjury unless it is true. Exemptions may be available depending on the nature of the offense and other related factors. Talk to the licensing analyst privately and s/he will explain the exemption process to you. **If you have ever been convicted of a serious crime such as robbery, sexual battery, child abuse, elder or dependent adult abuse, rape, first degree burglary, arson or kidnapping, you do not qualify for a criminal record exemption, and therefore cannot get licensed.**

What if I am already taking care of children?

Providers who are "caught" operating an unlicensed family child care home are more vulnerable than people who voluntarily get into the licensing process. Providers can be charged civil penalties up to \$200 per day for operating without a license. This penalty usually applies to providers who don't apply for a license within 15 days after a visit from a licensing analyst, who refuse to seek a license, or who seek a license but are denied – but the penalty can be applied to any unlicensed provider. Explain to CCL privately if you were unaware a license was required and begin the process of applying for one.

What if I want to care for more than six children?

Providers licensed for six can choose to care for two additional school age children if: 1) the children are at least six years old or in kindergarten; 2) the provider cares for no more than two infants; 3) all parents are notified in writing of the two extra children, and 4) the landlord gives written consent for the two extra children to providers who rent or lease. You probably will want to begin your program and get six children enrolled before you decide if you want to care for 8. Do not begin caring for eight children until you have met all of the requirements listed above.

Providers who want to care for more than eight children must have one year's experience as a licensed family child care provider, a director of a child care center or the equivalent. Examples of qualifying experience can be given by a licensing analyst. Providers will also need to obtain a clearance from their local fire marshal. Family child care providers who are licensed for 14 should call the business license office of the city they live in to find out if they are required to get a business license and whether or not they need to pay a fee.



Once I get my license, when will it be renewed? Will I be visited again?

There is an annual fee of either \$66 or \$127 depending on your home capacity. In addition, CCL will make periodic unannounced visits. However, if a complaint is received against your program, a licensing analyst will make a visit within 10 days of the complaint being filed. After the initial licensing visit, all visits are unannounced. Be sure you are operating within the licensing regulations at all times and you will be prepared for any visits – announced or unannounced. (Remember, by law, parents whose children are enrolled in your care can visit at any time without calling ahead.)

Are there other ways BANANAS can help me?

Yes. BANANAS offers a series of special family child care classes as well as other workshops and training.

You can send us a self-addressed stamped envelope for the free Handouts: "How to Write a Disaster Plan for Family Child Care," and "Safety Factors to Check for in a Family Child Care Home." Ask for our "Publications List" which describes our numerous other child care Handouts, or check www.bananasinc.org for upcoming events and to download our Handouts.

We also have an extensive resource library and videos on topics of child care, child development and parenting. Videos are available on loan to child care providers and parents who reside in Northern Alameda County.

If you reside in Northern Alameda County (Albany, Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland and Piedmont) you can receive our quarterly newsletter at no cost. If you live outside of our service area there is a \$5.00 per year subscription fee.

Call or come by our office to find out more. We have information about family child care associations, Federal Food Programs, insurance, accreditation and other support services, as well as how to get into our referral files.