Thank you for your inquiry regarding child care group home certification requirements. The Bureau of Child Care Licensing is a part of the Arizona Department of Health Services Licensing Division that certifies child care group homes and licenses child care facilities.

If you choose to provide child care for five or more children in your home, you are required to have your home certified. You will also be required to meet city, county, manufactured housing, or homeowner’s association codes, covenants and restrictions. It is your responsibility to find out what those might be before beginning the certification process.

For your information → did you know you can care for four children, for compensation, with all of your own children and not need to be certified?

The following questions will clarify some of the requirements that are necessary in order for you, the provider, to become certified:

1. Are you interested in caring for children in your own home? □ YES □ NO

2. Do you, as the provider, have a high school diploma or its equivalent and 3 credit hours or 60 workshop hours in early education, child development or a closely related field, or 12 months child care experience and are you at least 21 years of age or older? □ YES □ NO

3. Do you have an adult staff member available to be on premises when you are not present who has 6 months of child care experience and 2 credit hours or 30 clock hours in early education, child development or a closely related field? □ YES □ NO

4. Will you ensure that all personnel and household members who are 18 years of age and older submit fingerprints for a criminal history check? □ YES □ NO

5. If you have operated a child care home or facility in Arizona, or any other state, is your licensure history free from any denials, revocations, suspensions or any other legal actions? □ YES □ NO

6. Are you willing to comply with local laws, including zoning, building and fire? □ YES □ NO

7. Will you and/or your personnel allow representatives of the Bureau of Child Care Licensure to enter and inspect your home at any time during your hours of operation? □ YES □ NO

8. Will you maintain accurate records such as staff files, children’s files, medication permission forms, attendance records, etc., in accordance with state laws? □ YES □ NO

9. Are you willing to secure and maintain general commercial liability insurance? □ YES □ NO

10. Will child care be the only business on your home’s premises, during the hours of operation? □ YES □ NO
11. Will you maintain the staffing requirements of 1 staff member to 1 to 5 children or 2 staff members to 6 to 10 children, excluding your own children, at all times and not have more than 15 total children including your own children at any time?  

□ YES  □ NO

12. Are you willing and able to provide the materials and supplies required for all ages of children in your care?  

□ YES  □ NO

13. Are you willing to plan a program that includes a balance of activities and nutritious snacks and meals for children?  

□ YES  □ NO

14. Are you able to meet the square footage requirements for indoor space? (30 square feet per child, not including areas such as kitchen, bathroom, laundry room, workshop, hallway, garage, etc.)  

□ YES  □ NO

15. Are you able to meet the square footage requirements for outdoor space? (minimum 500 square feet total)  

□ YES  □ NO

16. Does your home have a direct exit to the outside on each floor/level? (Infants and children under the age of 5 years cannot be cared for above or below the ground level of the home unless there is a direct exit to the outside on that level.)  

□ YES  □ NO

17. Can you provide an outdoor play area that is partially shaded and enclosed by a fence that is at least 4 feet high with a gate that has a latch?  

□ YES  □ NO

18. If you have a swimming pool, is it separately fenced with at least a 5 foot high fence that has a self-closing, self-latching gate with a lock?  

□ YES  □ NO

19. Are you willing to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children in your care? (Some things to consider are animals, household chemicals, bodies of water such as spas, ponds, fountains, etc., trampolines, and firearms.)  

□ YES  □ NO

If you answered “NO” to any of the questions listed above, please call your local Bureau office and ask to speak with the ‘Surveyor on Duty’ in order to discuss the questions to which you answered “NO.”

If you have answered “YES” to all of the questions listed above, you meet some of the initial requirements for certification. You will need to submit your application and supporting documents, attend a Child Care Group Home Orientation Session, and have your home and outdoor play area inspected prior to becoming certified. When your application is complete and has been approved by the Department, you will be notified of the available training dates and times for the Orientation Session.

If you would like a Child Care Group Home Application Packet, you may print one from the Internet at: http://www.azdhs.gov/als/childcare/

A non-refundable application fee of $1000 will be required for certification in addition to the required documentation. A 50% discount of the application fee is available for those who choose to participate in the Empower Pack Program.