



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

DATE: August 11, 2020

TO: Regional Managing Directors
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs

THROUGH: Patricia Babcock, Deputy Secretary *Patricia Babcock*

FROM: Patricia Medlock, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare *PM*
Robert Anderson, Assistant Secretary for Operations *Robert H. Anderson*

SUBJECT: CFOP 170-11, Placement; Chapter 15, Non-DCF License

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notification that new child welfare operating procedures regarding the issuance of a non-DCF license.

BACKGROUND: In 2018, section 409.175, Florida Statutes, was updated to reflect new Levels of Licensure to be used to classify foster homes licensed by the Department of Children and Families. In addition to the Levels of Licensure, a new license type of *Non-DCF License* was developed. The purpose of creating a Non-DCF License is to maintain all placement settings in the state's official record, including facilities and homes licensed by entities other than the Department, and allow the Department to claim Title IV-E reimbursement for the placement of children in these licensed out-of-home care settings. As of April 12, 2019, functionality was added to FSFN to allow designated staff the ability to create a Non-DCF License.

On September 27, 2019, a memorandum was released with instructions to identify all non-DCF licensed providers, with placement of a Florida dependent youth, located outside the state for the issuance of a non-DCF license.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please distribute and implement this memorandum to all Department and CBC licensing specialists, ICPC coordinators, placement data entry operators, eligibility specialists, fiscal staff, and any other applicable staff.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions regarding the Non-DCF license process, please contact Tanisha Lee, Statewide Child-Caring and Child-Placing Licensing Specialist, at Tanisha.Lee@myflfamilies.com or call (850) 717-4659.

cc: Regional Family and Community Services Directors
Sheriff Offices that Conduct Child Protective Investigations
Barney Ray, Revenue Management & Partner Compliance Director
Scott Boland, Director for ICPC Interstate Compact
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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

Chapter 15

NON-DCF LICENSURE

15-1. Purpose. This chapter describes the Department's policies and procedures for the issuance of a Non-DCF license. It is the policy of the Department of Children and Families that non-DCF licensed placements are aligned with federal guidelines to claim Title IV-E for the costs associated with the child's out-of-home care.

15-2. Scope. The policies and procedures within this chapter apply to all staff of the Department, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBCs) and subcontracted providers involved with the placement of children in out-of-home care.

15-3. Authority. The following provides the legal authority that governs the issuance of a non-DCF license:

- a. Section [409.175](#), Florida Statutes.
- b. Chapter [65C-46](#), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)
- c. Chapter [65C-14](#), F.A.C.

15-4. Definitions.

a. "Entity" refers to a group home or facility licensed by an authority apart from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or that does not carry a child-caring agency license from DCF. Such agencies are the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Department of Health (DOH), Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH), and Title IV-E agencies of other states.

b. "Non-DCF License" refers to a license created in Florida's child welfare system of record for an entity not licensed by the Department for the purpose of meeting Title IV-E eligibility requirements for the placement of a dependency youth.

15-5. Requests for a Non-DCF License.

a. The CBC or their subcontracted provider shall submit a request for a non-DCF license for relatives, non-relatives, foster parents, group homes, or an entity to their DCF regional licensing staff. The CBC shall create the provider in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN). The CBC must search the provider in FSFN prior to creating a new profile to avoid duplicate providers. If multiple provider profiles exist, the additional profiles shall be merged when possible.

(1) Relative, non-relatives, and foster parents shall be created using their legal first and last name.

(2) Group homes and entities shall be created using the name on their license.

b. The CBC shall upload all required documents listed in section 15-6 and any additional documents received related to the license in the provider file cabinet in FSFN under Provider Household Documents with the sub-type of Other.

c. Documents shall be named to include the applicable year, provider name, title of the upload, and number if multiple uploads exist for the same file. See examples below:

2020 Provider Name Non-DCF Licensing Packet-Pt.1

2020 Provider Name Non-DCF Licensing Packet-Pt.2

d. The CBC shall notify the regional licensing staff of the request for issuance of a non-DCF license prior to or upon placement of the child. Placements may not be Title IV-E reimbursed if placed during an unlicensed period.

e. The CBC requesting a non-DCF license shall contact the regional licensing staff for the region in which the entity is located. Requests can be submitted via email and must include the name of the non-DCF provider, address, licensing authority, point of contact name and phone number, and FSFN provider ID.

15-6. Requirements for a Non-DCF License.

a. Requirements for Entities Licensed in Florida.

(1) Regional licensing staff shall ensure the following required documents are obtained and uploaded into FSFN:

(a) Copy of the non-DCF license request from the CBC;

(b) Copy of the entity's active license;

(c) Criminal record checks (CRC) to include fingerprint and any additional background screening results provided by the entity for staff and household members; and,

(d) All abuse and neglect history results for staff and household members including any out-of-state abuse history checks, if applicable.

(2) Regional licensing staff shall advise the group home entity on requesting an agency review through the Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) Background Screening Clearinghouse following protocol outlined below:

(a) Regional licensing staff shall provide the entity with the Department OCA Request Form.

(b) Upon completion, the regional licensing staff shall follow the OCA request protocol for child-caring agencies and submit to the Background Screening Unit for processing.

(c) Once the OCA number is issued, the entity shall follow instructions, provided by the Background Screening Unit, to register in the Clearinghouse, maintain their agency roster, and screen newly onboarded staff.

(d) Regional licensing staff shall obtain a copy of staff eligibility clearance letters and upload results into FSFN. Eligibility clearance letters must include a determination date under the category *DCF General*. Clearance letters shall have the abuse and neglect screening box selected indicating the status of the individual's results.

(3) Regional licensing staff shall review abuse and neglect records for any staff, whose results indicate a verified finding exists in which the individual was named the caregiver responsible.

(a) Regional licensing staff shall assess for any concerns that would impact the safety and well-being of a dependent youth.

(b) If safety concerns are present, the regional licensing staff shall notify the CBC in writing and not issue a Non-DCF license.

(c) Regional licensing staff shall inform the licensing authority that concerns exist when the report involves an allegation that occurred at the licensing authority's facility.

b. Requirements for Out-of-State Foster Homes, Group Homes, or Entities.

(1) The CBC shall ensure the following required documents are uploaded into FSFN:

(a) Copy of the non-DCF license request to the region;

(b) Copy of the entity or foster home's active license or certification;

(c) Criminal record checks (CRC) to include fingerprint and additional background screening results of caregivers, household members, or staff; and,

(d) All abuse and neglect history results conducted for the caregivers, household members, or staff, including any out of state abuse and neglect record checks for individuals who have resided outside of their current state of residence within the previous five (5) years.

(2) For states that do not release copies of the criminal record checks or abuse checks, the CBC shall obtain detailed documentation that confirms the following:

(a) A CRC was completed that includes a fingerprint-based check of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC);

(b) The foster parent, caregiver, household member, or staff has not been convicted of any of the prohibited felonies listed in §§ 471(a)(20)(A)(i) and (ii) of the Act;

(c) The date the CRC and abuse check were completed and the evidence reviewed; and,

(d) Whom the CRC and abuse check were completed by.

(3) Documentation for items listed above will be accepted for states using the ICPC Safety Requirement Documentation Form provided by the ICPC coordinator.

(4) The CBC shall work in conjunction with the local CBC ICPC coordinator to obtain the required documents outlined in this instruction for providers licensed in another state. The CBC shall complete the Non-DCF Attestation Form to attest compliance with all background screening and non-DCF license requirements.

c. Training hours are not required to be documented in FSFN for the purpose of a non-DCF license.

15-7. License Issuance.

a. Regional licensing staff are responsible for issuing a non-DCF license for entities located in their region.

b. The regions shall issue a non-DCF license within ten business days upon receipt of a complete non-DCF licensing packet.

c. Regional licensing staff shall select the non-DCF license type and select the applicable license sub-type in the FSFN. The non-DCF license sub-types include:

(1) *AHCA – Agency for Health Care Administration;*

(2) *APD – Agency for Persons with Disabilities;*

(3) *DOH – Department of Health;*

(4) *ICPC – Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (entity licensed by a State agency outside of Florida); and,*

(5) *SAMH – Substance Abuse and Mental Health.*

d. The *Date Completed Application Rec'd* field in FSFN is the date the regional licensing staff received the non-DCF license request from the CBC.

e. The license date of issuance is the date all required background screenings are complete. The non-DCF license expiration date will be the same as the entity's current license expiration date.

f. Regional licensing staff shall notify the CBC of the license approval, as a template cannot be generated from the FSFN system.

g. Regional licensing staff shall notify the CBC if a license cannot be issued.

15- 8. License Renewal.a. Requirements for the CBC.

For license renewals, the CBC will provide the regional licensing staff with written notification of the need to renew the specific license. A lapse in a license will result in the inability to utilize Title IV-E funds during the unlicensed period.

For renewal requests for entities or foster homes out-of-state, the CBC shall upload into FSFN a copy of the entity's renewed license from the licensing authority, along with the applicable items outlined in paragraph 15-6b of this operating procedure.

b. Requirements for the Regional Licensing Team.

(1) The regional licensing team will notify the CBC of non-DCF licenses that are due to expire.

(2) For renewal requests of entities licensed in Florida, regional licensing staff shall notify the entity of the need to request an annual Florida abuse and neglect history check.

(3) Staff shall issue a non-DCF license within ten business days upon receipt of a complete non-DCF licensing packet.

(4) The date of issuance is when the entity's active license was issued. The non-DCF license expiration date will be the same as the entity's current expiration date.