

Child Care Center Licensing Application Process

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licenses and monitors all child care centers. The Ohio system for licensing is completely online. The licensing process requires that you provide an updated email address and to regularly check your email account. This is how Ohio licensing communicates with you.

Let's Get Started

Use this checklist to help organize your application

Licensing Application Process Checklist

- Create an email account
- Create your Ohio Professional Registry Profile
- Complete the Pre-Licensing Training for Child Care Centers
- Work with local authorities to obtain the child care program location and needed approvals
- Access the licensing application in the Ohio Child Care Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS)
- Obtain additional required training
- Understand all Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers
- Complete all required background checks
- Complete online application, which has a non-refundable fee

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1. Create an email account for all of your licensing needs

- If you do not have a current email account, you will need to create one.
- Popular services are [Google Mail](#) and [Yahoo](#):



2. Create a Professional Registry Profile (OPR)

The Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) is an online tool for Ohio's early childhood and afterschool professionals. The OPR allows child care professionals to track experience, education, credentials and training as they advance in their careers. For more information about the OPR, please visit this website: <https://occrra.org/wp-content/occrra/opr/opr-faq-registry.pdf>

HOW TO: Create a OPR profile



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3. ODJFS Pre-Licensing Training

Pre-Licensing Training must be completed by all persons prior to submitting a licensing application and is only available online. After you complete the Pre-Licensing Training, OCCRRA will verify your training in the OPR.

HOW TO: Register for and access the Pre-Licensing Training

- Sign in to “Find Training”
- Click the “ODJFS Pre-Licensing Training” link in the search text box
- Click on “Pre-Licensing Training for Child Care Centers.” Add it to your Cart
- Click on the red shopping cart and choose “View Cart”
- Click on the green “Checkout” box
- You can access the training by going back to your Profile page and selecting “Upcoming Trainings”
- To help you organize your notes, download and use the “Child Care Center Pre-Licensing Workbook” from the 4C for Children website at <https://www.4cforchildren.org/providers/become-a-provider>
- After you complete the Pre-Licensing Training, it will be verified in your OCCRRA OPR Profile. This may take a couple of weeks. Once verified, you can then create your OCLQS account online. See below for more details.



TIP: *Starting with strong business practices can help you and your business be successful. 4C for Children training can help! Look for the following training by visiting the [4C for Children website](https://www.4cforchildren.org).*

- Starting a Child Care Program
- Strengthening Business Practices for Center-based Programs

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4. Read and Understand Licensing Rules

Reading and understanding the rules is necessary to gain knowledge and understanding of the mandatory requirements to be a licensed child care provider. Be sure to visit the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website](#) to read the child care rules and forms. Don't forget to read the Appendices and Forms.



TIP: *Questions about a rule after reading it? Please contact:*
[ODJFS Child Care Policy Helpdesk](#) | 1-877-302-2347, option 4

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5. Location and Needed Approvals

Do not sign a contract for the location of your program unless:

- The location
 - has adequate spaces inside and outside to meet licensing requirements
 - has zoning approval needed for a child care center
- The local building and fire department authorities are able to issue a certificate of occupancy, allowing you to care for children in each space you plan to use.
- You have considered the expenses of needed changes such as the addition of exit doors, sprinkler systems, access to water and plumbing, kitchen modifications and other occupancy costs.
- You have money to pay for the space while completing the startup processes.

TIP: *Contact information for building departments:*

- [Commercial \(non-residential\) building departments](#)
- [Residential building departments.](#)
- Call the Ohio Department of Commerce at (614) 644-2613 and be directed to an appropriate Board of Building Standards staff member.

Contact information for building codes:

Visit the [Ohio Department of Commerce website](#) and search the Forms & Publications section:

- Select a category “Codes”
- Select one:
 - 1-, 2-, 3- Family (Residential Code of Ohio)
 - Non-residential (Ohio Building Code)
- Select an item

Ohio.gov | Department of Commerce

Contact information for food service:

The local health department can issue a food-service license or the needed exemption. [Click here to find contact information for your local health department.](#) (Use the address of your program.)

Ohio | Department of Health

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6. Background Checks

Watch this video from OCCRRA to learn more information about background checks



Background checks must be completed for each of the following:

- Owners and administrators of licensed child care centers or applicants to be licensed as a child care center.
- Employees in a licensed child care center as defined in rule 5101:2-12-01 of the Administrative Code.
- Child care staff members in a licensed child care center as defined in rule 5101:2-12-01 of the Administrative Code, including substitutes.

TIP: *Additional Training Requirements:*

- CPR and First Aid
- Child Abuse Recognition and Prevention
- Communicable Disease Recognition and Prevention

Register for the training today on the [4C for Children website](http://www.4cforchildren.org).

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7. On-line Application and OCLQS Account

Once you have completed the Pre-Licensing Training and the OPR has verified your training, you can begin the application process in the [Ohio Child Care Licensing and Quality System \(OCLQS\)](#). There is a \$500 non-refundable and non-transferable application fee to apply for a child care center license.



You will need to have all required documentation completed prior to starting your Child Care Center License Application. For more information, see rule 5101:2-12-02, Appendix A. For a complete list of documents, refer to the Document Checklist in this packet.

TIP: For additional assistance Visit the ODJFS website [for a list of published Job Aids](#) that will provide detailed directions for each licensing function.

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8. Next Steps

Once your application is submitted through OCLQS, it will be processed and assigned to an ODJFS Licensing Specialist. The specialist will contact you about the next steps to completing your child care center licensure. **Remember to keep all of your contact information updated and regularly check email and voicemail.**

TIP: *Additional Supports from 4C for Children:*

- Contact a Quality Programs Specialist for help with any questions you may have.
- Look for the following workshops to help you develop strong business practices that will help you and your program be successful:
 - Starting a Child Care Program
 - Strengthening Business Practices for Center-based Programs

Visit our website to find additional resources and to sign up for our newsletter.

 <p>Update Your Program Information</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	 <p>Provider e-Newsletter</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	 <p>Common Early Childhood Acronyms</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>
 <p>Cincinnati Preschool Promise</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	 <p>Montgomery County Preschool Promise</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	 <p>Early Learning Resources OHIO</p> <p>Sharing Knowledge + Business Solutions</p> <p>Resources for Ohio ECE Programs</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>