

# Understanding the Pre-Licensure Process

Procedures for becoming a licensed child care agency are outlined below in a 15-step process

Step  
**1**

## Contact Pre-Licensure Unit

Prospective child care providers should contact the Pre-Licensure Unit at [ChildCarePrelicensure.dhs@tn.gov](mailto:ChildCarePrelicensure.dhs@tn.gov) or 615-906-0517. (Email is preferred)

Step  
**2**

## Program Specialist contacts prospective child care provider

A Program Specialist will make an initial call to the prospective provider and walk them through the Pre-Licensure process. The Program Specialist will provide and explain paperwork if Child Care Certificate Program (CCCP) is required for any available grants.

Step  
**3**

## Program Specialists register prospective providers for orientation/training

Program Specialists will register prospective providers for orientation and intake training. Prospective providers will be sent information via email with a WebEx link for the training (which is offered monthly) and information to register for Small Business Academy through the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network.

Step  
**4**

## Prospective providers complete Small Business Academy

Once orientation training is complete, prospective providers will complete Small Business Academy training through the CCR&R Network. A list of prospective providers who have completed the SBA will be provided to the Pre-Licensure Unit.

Step  
**5**

## Prospective providers are assigned a program specialist

Once orientation, intake training, and Small Business Academy training are complete, prospective providers will be assigned a Program Specialist.

Step  
**6**

## Assigned Program Specialist gathers information from prospective provider

The assigned Program Specialist will gather general information from the prospective provider. If a location has been chosen, the Program Specialist will request clearance from Choose Safe Places.

Step  
**7**

## Prospective provider completes additional requirements

The Program Specialist will guide the prospective provider through additional requirements:  
Obtaining a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), Obtaining a Use and Occupancy Permit, Obtaining a business permit, Completing a background check

## Step 8

### Program Specialist visits the location

Once the Program Specialist receives all documents and the location is deemed safe by Choose Safe Places, they will visit the location to look for any obvious hazards or safety issues and to determine capacity by measuring the location.

## Step 9

### If deemed suitable/safe, Program Specialist requests State Fire and Environmental inspections

If deemed suitable/safe, the Program Specialist will request State Fire and Environmental inspections. Locations **MUST** meet standards set forth by State Fire and Environmental and receive an approved inspection report before an agency can operate at this location.

## Step 10

### Prospective provider submits application and fee

After State Fire and Environmental inspection requirements have been met and approvals have been received, the prospective provider will receive an application from the Program Specialist to complete and submit with the required fee.

## Step 11

### All documents will be reviewed. Those interested in grants will be contacted for next steps

The Program Specialist and Program Manager will check to determine that all forms and documents have been completed correctly and submitted and that all requirements have been met. If the prospective provider is interested in available grants, their information will be sent to Childcare Tennessee. **\*If the prospective provider is not applying for grants, continue to step fourteen.**

## Step 12

### Childcare Tennessee provides grant documents to prospective providers to be submitted

After receiving information that the prospective provider is interested in applying for any applicable grants, Childcare Tennessee will provide the grant document to the prospective provider to be completed and submitted.

## Step 13

### Once grant application is reviewed, grant is approved by Pre-Licensure Program Manager

Once Childcare Tennessee receives and reviews the grant application, the grant will be approved by the Pre-Licensure Program Manager. The Program Specialist will reach out to the prospective provider to guide in collecting additional documentation that will be required prior to a provisional license being issued.

## Step 14

### Program Specialist, local Field Supervisor, and Licensing Consultant conducts walk-throughs

The Program Specialist will conduct the first walk-through of the agency location. The local Field Supervisor and Licensing Consultant will conduct the final walk-through. If the agency is compliant with all rules and requirements of the Department and all required documents and trainings have been completed, a recommendation will be made for provisional licensure approval.

## Step 15

### Provisional License is issued. Additional grant requirements need completion

A Provisional License will be issued. If the provider has applied for grants requiring participation in the Child Care Certificate Program, the agency will complete any additional required paperwork to become enrolled in the program.

More information can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/families/child-care-services/how-to-become-a-licensed-child-care-provider/procedures-for-becoming-a-licensed-child-care-agency.html>

