

State of Small Family Child Care Homes in Alabama

66% of total points	Score: 93/140 Rank: 6
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Number of children in care when state licensing begins:*	1
Inspection or visit before being licensed:	Yes

Supply of FCC Homes in 2008

Number of FCC homes	1,863
Number of spaces/slots in FCC homes	N/A

Average Price of Child Care in FCC Homes in 2008

For an infant	\$4,498
For a 4-year-old	\$4,342

Weaknesses

- Requires routine inspections only once every two years.
- Exempt providers receiving subsidies do not have to undergo background checks.
- Check of sex offender registries and juvenile records are not explicitly included in background checks.
- Providers are not required to communicate with parents about the care of their children or have contracts with the parents.
- Providers are only required to offer one of eight learning activities - opportunities for active play.
- No requirement limiting the number of infants and toddlers.

Strengths

- Providers caring for even one unrelated child for pay are required to be licensed.
- Both routine inspections/visits and those conducted when there is a complaint are unannounced.
- Licensed FCC providers and their substitutes and assistants are required to have background checks. Includes fingerprints, criminal records and child abuse and neglect registries.
- Providers are required to have 32 hours of training (including CPR and first aid) before they can work with children.
- Providers are required to have at least 20 hours of annual training (including renewal of CPR and first aid).
- Providers are required to have specific toys and materials for motor development, language and literacy, art, math, science and dramatic play. Books are specifically required.
- Providers must follow nine of 10 health requirements - handwashing, meals/snacks, immunizations, exclusion of ill children, administration of medications, toxic substances, diapering/toileting, home sanitation and after hour care.
- Regulations address nine of the 10 safety requirements - SIDS prevention, discipline, crib safety, electrical hazards, protection from water hazards, fire drills/emergency plans, playground surfaces, supervision, and transportation.

Recommendations

- Inspect family child care homes at least annually.
- Conduct background checks on family members over age 12 and exempt providers receiving subsidies.
- Use sex offender registries and juvenile records to conduct background checks.
- Require providers to communicate with parents about the care of their children and have written contracts with parents.
- Require providers to plan learning activities, read to children, introduce mathematical concepts, offer creative activities and dramatic play, encourage self-help skills, and limit TV viewing.
- Define the number of infants and toddlers a provider can have in care at one time.

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Small Family Child Care Standards	
Standards for Ranking	Scores
1. Requires FCC homes to be inspected/visited before being licensed, at least quarterly, and when there is a complaint.♣	
2. Requires FCC home inspections/visits (routine and when there are complaints) to be unannounced.♣	
3. Requires licensed FCC providers, their substitutes and assistants, family members over 12 years of age, and exempt providers receiving subsidies to have a background check.	
4. Background checks include checks criminal records, juvenile records, child abuse registries and sex offender registries. Checks of federal records are based on fingerprints.	
5. Requires FCC providers to have a high school diploma or GED, and have the CDA■, college courses in ECE○ or an Associate's degree initially or within 3 years of starting to provide child care.	
6. Requires FCC providers to have at least 40 hours of initial training (including CPR and first aid).	
7. Requires FCC providers to have initial training in eight specific areas.⊖	

Small Family Child Care Standards	
Standards for Ranking	Scores
8. Requires FCC providers to have at least 24 hours of annual training (including CPR and first aid renewal).	
9. Requires FCC providers to communicate with parents, have contracts with parents, allow parents access to the home, inform parents on use of substitutes and give written policies to parents.	
10. Requires FCC providers to have toys and materials available in eight different developmental areas.⊕⊕	
11. Requires FCC providers to offer learning opportunities in eight different areas.⊕⊕⊕	
12. Limits the total number of children that can be cared for in a small FCC home based on the ages of children in care.	
13. Addresses 10 critical health areas.⊕⊕⊕⊕	
14. Addresses 10 critical safety issues.⊕⊕⊕⊕⊕	

Key:



*States receive a score of 0 if they do not license small family child care homes. States receive a score of 0 if they do not inspect or visit before licensing. States receive a score of 0 if the number of children the provider (including the provider's children) could care for pay is seven or above. The total maximum points a state could receive is 140.

♣Out of 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and the U.S. Department of Defense. ♣To derive the total number of children in care, NACCRRRA started with the number of children in care when state licensing begins. One child was added if the state does not include the provider's own children in establishing its licensing threshold. One child was added for each family exempted before licensing begins. ♣Credit is given for licensing, fire, safety and health inspections. ■Child Development Associate credential. ○Early Childhood Education. ⊖The eight areas of initial training are child development, child abuse prevention, learning activities, health and safety, child guidance, business practices, CPR and first aid. ⊕The eight different types of toys and materials include those for: motor development, language and literacy, art, math, science, dramatic play, books for all ages and materials that are culturally sensitive. ⊕⊕The eight types of learning opportunities are: plan a variety of learning activities, read to children, introduce mathematical concepts, offer creative activities, offer dramatic play, offer active play, encourage self-help skills and limit use of television. ⊕⊕⊕The 10 health areas are: hand washing, meals and snacks, immunizations, exclusion of ill children, universal health requirements, administration of medications, toxic substances, diapering/toileting, home sanitation and weekend/evening care. ⊕⊕⊕⊕The 10 safety areas are: SIDS prevention, discipline/prohibiting corporal punishment, crib safety, electrical hazards, protection from swimming pools and other water sources, fire drills/emergency plans, outdoor playground surfaces, supervision, door locks/safety gates and transportation.

Source for regulatory information: State regulations reviewed by staff at the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies and by state resource and referral and/or state licensing staff and are current as of 2/1/2010. Source for capacity and price information: National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies and its members. All capacity and price information reported are 2008 data.