

of the white pages for the address and telephone number of the CCLD district office serving your area.)

- The CCLD district office will schedule you to attend an orientation for all new applicants. At the orientation, you will receive a license application packet, which includes the Group Home Program Statement (if not acquired from the county) and information about licensing requirements. You will also receive information about obtaining an AFDC-FC rate from the Foster Care Rates Bureau.
- If you want an AFDC-FC rate set for your group home, you must obtain a support letter from the host county, primary placing county or regional consortium of counties for your program. However, before a support letter is issued, the county must review your program statement. Submit one copy of the Group Home Program Statement to the county social services, probation departments, primary placing counties or regional consortium of counties for their review and approval.
- The county will give you a copy of the Group Home Program Statement to complete. The completed document will be used by the county to determine if the program meets its needs. The county may also schedule an interview and/or site visit. If the county needs your program, it will give you a letter of support.
- You must submit the completed license application, the original and one copy of the Group Home Program Statement and the county letter of support to the CCLD district office. The CCLD district office will send to the Foster Care Rates Bureau a copy of your Group Home Program Statement and the letter of support from the county.

## RATE APPLICATIONS

- You must submit the Group Home Program Rate Application forms directly to the CDSS, Foster Care Rates Bureau, 744 P Street, M.S. 19-74, Sacramento, CA 95814.
- If you will only be serving children placed by regional centers, you only need to submit the Group Home Program Rate Application (SR1), a copy of the license and verification of status as a nonprofit organization. This enables the Foster Care Rates Bureau to assign a rate program number so the county can process AFDC-FC payments for eligible children.

For additional information, please contact the nearest CCLD district office. The telephone number is listed in the State Government section of the white pages of your local telephone directory. For rates information, please call CDSS, Foster Care Rates Bureau at **(916) 323-1263**.



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
AGENCY  
S. Kimberly Belshé, Secretary  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

SO, YOU  
WANT TO  
OPEN A  
GROUP  
HOME FOR  
CHILDREN?

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YOU  
NEED  
TO KNOW

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DIVISION

*promoting healthy, safe and  
supportive community care*

## WHAT IS A GROUP HOME?

*A group home provides 24-hour nonmedical care and supervision to children in a structured environment. Services are provided, at least in part, by staff employed by the licensee. Group home licensees are responsible for the care and supervision of children placed in their group home.*

*Group homes are licensed by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD). CCLD also monitors group homes by making unannounced visits at least once per year.*

## WHO PLACES CHILDREN IN GROUP HOMES?

County social services and probation departments place the greatest numbers of children in group homes. Additionally, county mental health agencies and regional centers place children. Parents, individuals or families may also place children for whom they have legal custody. Such placements are called private placements.

## WHAT TYPES OF CHILDREN ARE PLACED IN GROUP HOMES?

### 1. Dependent Children

Children who are physically, sexually or emotionally abused, neglected or exploited or at risk of being abused neglected or exploited. These children often have behavioral and/or emotional problems that prevent them from being cared for in a family environment. They are generally dependents of the Juvenile Court and placed by county social services departments.

### 2. Juvenile Wards

Children who are juvenile offenders. These children are generally wards of the Juvenile Court and placed by county probation departments.

### 3. Developmentally Disabled

Children who are developmentally disabled. These children are generally placed by regional centers.

### 4. Seriously Emotionally Disturbed

Children who are identified as Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) and require out-of-home placement in order to benefit from an educational program. These children are generally placed by county mental health agencies.

If you wish to operate a group home, first determine the type(s) of children you want to serve. You are strongly encouraged to discuss your plans with staff at the county social services or probation departments or other placing agencies to get an idea of the services and programs needed by the children they will place.

## WHO PAYS FOR CHILDREN PLACED IN GROUP HOMES?

Aid to Families with Dependent Children - Foster Care (AFDC-FC) funds generally pay the costs for children placed by county social services or probation departments. AFDC-FC funding is a combination of state/county or federal/state/county dollars.

**Before AFDC-FC funding can be paid on behalf of a child placed in a group home, four conditions must be met:**

1. The group home program must have the written support of the host county, primary placing county or regional consortium of counties. The host county is the county in which the facility is, or will be, located.
2. The group home must be licensed by CCLD.
3. The group home must be organized and operated on a nonprofit basis (verified by a federal IRS tax exemption letter or a copy of the articles of incorporation filed with the California Secretary of State).
4. The group home "program" must have an AFDC-FC rate established by the CDSS Foster Care Rates Bureau. A group home "program" is a unique combination of services that are provided to or will be provided to specific types of children in one or more licensed group homes.

Group homes that care for children placed by regional centers are paid for the services by the regional centers. Some of these children may also be AFDC-FC eligible.

Children placed by other agencies, including county mental health agencies, may have other funding sources to cover the costs of their placement.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

- Contact county social services, probation, mental health agencies or other placing agencies to find out the kinds of group home programs and services they need to meet the needs of the children they will place.
- Contact the CCLD district office that serves the geographic area in which the group home will be located. (Check your local telephone directory under the State Government section