

# Child Welfare Licensure Inquiry Information

The steps toward opening a Child Placing Agency or Group Residential Facility are as follows:

- A. A “certificate of need” must be addressed and obtained prior to any application process being initiated. The “certificate of need” is obtain through the West Virginia Health Care Authority and is a statement from them indicating that your proposed agency or facility will not duplicate services in West Virginia and that there is a need for the proposed services. The application and other relevant information regarding the certificate of need may be obtained at <http://www.hcawv.org>.
  1. A Request for Information/Request for Application (RFI/RFA) may be issued by the Bureau for Children and Families, when a specific need for a group residential facility or other behavioral health services have been identified. When this occurs provider agencies do not need to obtain a certificate of need, when responding to the RFI/RFA. To check for issued RFI/RFA’s go to <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/>.
  2. To expand or change services offered by an agency, a new “certificate of need” would be required.
  3. For the criteria of a Summary Review, please review [WV Statute 49-7-30](#).
- B. Once an application has been made to the West Virginia Health Care Authority, they will determine your “certificate of need” status and notify your agency.
- C. The regulations for licensure for Child Placing Agencies and Group Residential Facilities provide the requirements for licensure in West Virginia and can be obtained at <http://www.wvsos.com>
- D. The State Fire Marshal’s Office must be contacted to conduct a Life Safety and Fire inspection of any existing building or new construction. They can be contacted at 304-558-2191.
- E. The Bureau for Public Health will need to be contacted to complete an Environmental Health Inspection. They can be contacted at 304-558-2971.
- F. When your agency receives your “certificate of need” or it is determined that a certificate of need is not necessary, and has obtained the inspections by the State Fire Marshal and Bureau for Public Health, an application for either a Child Placing License (Foster Care, Adoption, Transitional Living, Community Re-entry) or a Group Residential License ( Group Residential Treatment Facilities, Emergency Shelters, Maternity/Parenting Facilities, Outdoor Therapeutic Educational Facilities, ICF-MR or Developmentally Disabled Facilities, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities, and Therapeutic Residential Schools) must be submitted to the Bureau for Children and Families Licensing Unit. The application packet may be obtained at the [Bureau for Children and](#)

# Child Welfare Licensure Inquiry Information

[Families Residential Child Care Licensing page](#) or by calling the Children and Adult Services at 304-558-7980 and speak to the Licensing Unit.

- G. If the agency or facility plans to serve children in the custody of the State, you will need to contact the Division of Grant and Contracts, under the Bureau or Children and Families. They can be contacted at 304-558-8562.
- H. Agencies or Facilities providing residential and/or behavioral health services to children in State's custody will need to contact the Bureau for Medical Services for information regarding provider enrollment with the West Virginia Medicaid Program. Information can be obtained through 304-558-1700.

A license to provide behavioral health services in a residential setting for children pursuant to WV Code §27-17-3 will be deemed by OFHLAC based upon licensure from the Bureau for Children and Families (BCF). Your enrollment form for providing behavioral health services must include a copy of your initial license from BCF. **MEDICAID PAYMENT WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL OFFICIAL ENROLLMENT OCCURS. AGENCIES WITH MULTIPLE PROGRAMS MUST ENROLL EACH PROGRAM SEPARATELY WITH MEDICAID.**

- I. BCF's Licensing Unit will complete a remote or on-site licensing review of your facility or agency prior to opening and will issue an initial license for 6 months. Another review will be completed prior to the expiration of the initial license for a regular license. A regular license can be issued up to two years.