

Resource: Evaluate Your Space

The following questions can be used as a guide to help you think about the space you're considering for your family child care home. Check with your [state licensing agency](#) and your local [Child Care Resource & Referral \(CCR&R\)](#) agency regarding specific requirements for your state. Those requirements are the ones you need to follow. You should be able to answer “yes” to the questions below.

Structural Questions

	Yes	No
Have you reviewed your state's licensing requirements regarding structural requirements needed to operate a family child care home in your state?		
Have you checked with your state licensing agency to make sure you can legally operate the child care program on the level of the home you wish to operate? (Some states may have restrictions on whether the child care can be located on an upper or lower level of a home.)		
Are there at least two exits on your ground floor that lead to the outside?		
Are locks on bathroom or bedroom doors inaccessible to children? Can you open the lock quickly from the outside?		
Is there a bathroom located on the floor where you'll care for the children?		
If you have a working fireplace or wood stove, is it safely screened and out of children's reach?		

Physical Space

	Yes	No
Have you reviewed your state's licensing requirements to learn about the indoor and outdoor space requirements that are required for family child care homes?		
Review your state's child care licensing requirements to learn how many square feet are required per child indoors and outdoors. Does your space meet these requirements?		
Is there enough space for each child to move freely?		
Will you have a space for each child's personal belongings?		
Can you maintain adequate air flow and comfortable room temperature?		

Evaluate Your Space *continued*

	Yes	No
Are you able to keep your hot water heater at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit so that children are safe from scalding?		
Is the physical layout arranged so that caregivers can view all areas at all times?		
Will you have places for children to play, rest, and eat?		
Is there room for storage of cleaning supplies, staff belongings and additional items where they are not accessible to children?		
Do you have a safe outdoor play space in your backyard, or is there a playground nearby that you will be allowed to use? Check with your state's licensing agency to determine what constitutes an outdoor play area for family child care homes.		
Is the surface under outdoor play equipment soft and free from dangerous objects to prevent injury?		
Is there a fence or natural barrier around your outdoor play space?		
If you have a swimming pool, is there a locked fence around it that meets the height required by your state?		
Have you checked the area surrounding your family child care program for other potential water safety hazards (lakes, ponds, creeks, fountains, etc.) and consulted your state licensing agency regarding safety protocols?		

Health and Safety

	Yes	No
If you have an older home (built before 1975), has your home been tested for lead, asbestos, or other toxic materials? (Your community health department or child care licensing agency can refer you to experts who can take samples of paint and other materials for testing.)		
Have air quality or pollution issues in and around the family child care home been addressed?		
Have you been in contact with your local fire station or other state fire officials to learn about local fire safety rules ?		
Have you reviewed the Americans with Disabilities Act to make sure you understand how to plan an accessible design?		