

National Model Licensing Standards Category	National Model Licensing Requirements	Florida Comments	Florida Policy Reference
A. Foster Home Eligibility a. Threshold Requirements	i. Applicants must be age 18 or older	Currently, Florida requires an applicant to be 21 years or older. This minimum age standard is to help ensure that applicants have the level of maturity and stability necessary to provide care, nurturing support, and supervision to a foster child.	Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 65C-13.030(6)(a)
A. Foster Home Eligibility a. Threshold Requirements	iii. Applicants must be able to communicate with the child in the child's own language and applicants must be able to communicate with the title IV-E agency, health care providers, and other service providers.	Standards should allow for flexibility as state agencies and community partners are able to provide interpreter services, considering that placement assessments are conducted to determine the appropriateness of placing of a child in a home.	FAC 65C-030(6)(b)
A. Foster Home Eligibility b. Physical and Mental Health	b. Physical and Mental Health: All applicants must have recent (conducted within the prior 12 months) physical exams from a licensed health care professional that indicate that the applicants are capable of caring for an additional child or children.	States should be allowed flexibility in obtaining the necessary documentation to determine the applicant's ability to care for additional children to include exceptions due to the religious beliefs of the family.	FAC 65C-13.025(4)(f)(15)(k)(3)(a)(b)
A. Foster Home Eligibility b. Physical and Mental Health	iv. All children who are household members must be up to date on immunizations consistent with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, unless the immunization is contrary to the child's health as documented by a licensed health care professional.	Standards should allow for flexibility as not all state laws require child immunizations and make allowance for religious beliefs. Florida's foster care licensure requirements do not require immunizations of the applicants' children. As a part of the home study process, licensing counselors assess all members of the household. This assessment includes the physical, mental, and emotional health of each household member and how placement	FAC 65C-13.025(4)(f)(15)(k)(3)(a)(b)

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		of a child in the home may impact the household members as well as the child being placed in the home.	
A. Foster Home Eligibility c. Background Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abuse or neglect; • Spousal abuse; • A crime against children (including child pornography); • A crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery; • Physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the last five (5) years; and 	Florida's requirement includes child abuse registry checks on applicants as well as all household members regardless of age. Checks on minor children provides information regarding child on child sexual abuse and other child abuse reports which may not include the applicants as a participant in the report. In addition, checks on minor children allow licensing to assess the children in the home.	FAC 65C-13.023(2)
A. Foster Home Eligibility d. Home Study	iv. Multiple applicant references that attest to the capability of the applicant to care for the child, including at least one from a relative and one from a non-relative.	Florida's requirements include references which look to attest to the applicant's capability to care for a child through the request of references from a broad range of individuals. These individuals include (3) personal non-relative references, adult child references, school references for school-age children residing in the home, child care provider references for preschool-age children in the home, and references regarding previous licensure as an out of home caregiver.	FAC 65C-13.025(5)(b)(12)
B. Foster Family Home Health and Safety a. Living Space	iii. At least one properly operating bathroom with a toilet, sink and tub or shower.	Florida's requirements include language clarifying that the bathroom must have a door for privacy.	FAC 65C-13.030(7)(e)

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<p>B. Foster Family Home Health and Safety</p> <p>b. Condition of Home</p>	<p>iv. Weapons and ammunition (separately) stored, locked, unloaded, and inaccessible to children.</p>	<p>States should have flexibility in defining and operationalizing the safe storage of firearms. Florida's foster care licensure requirements for the safe storage of firearms are incorporated by reference of the state law requirements for all Florida residents. A loaded firearm must be secured in a locked box or container or in a location that a reasonable person would be to be secured. Florida's foster care licensure requirements include each applicant signing a fire safety acknowledgement form.</p>	<p>Florida Statutes 790.174</p>
<p>E. Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety, and Evacuation Plans</p>	<p>a. Have at least one smoke detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas. b. Have at least one carbon monoxide detector on each level of occupancy of the home and at least one near all sleeping areas. c. Have at least one operable fire extinguisher that is readily accessible. d. Be free of obvious fire hazards, such as defective heating equipment or improperly stored flammable materials. e. Have a written emergency evacuation plan to be reviewed with the child and posted in a prominent place in the home. f. Maintain a comprehensive list of emergency telephone numbers, including poison control, and post those numbers in a prominent place in the home. g. Maintain first aid supplies.</p>	<p>Further consideration may be needed regarding multi-level homes. Florida's requirements outline that "each floor in the home must have a fully charged, unexpired fire extinguisher." In the event of a fire, having an operable fire extinguisher on each level of the home would increase accessibility.</p> <p>States should be allowed flexibility in the requirement of carbon monoxide detectors. Florida's requirements outline the fire safety requirements for foster care licensure to include specific home conditions that would require a carbon monoxide alarm. All homes are not required to have a carbon monoxide detector.</p>	<p>FAC 65C-13.030(7)(h) and FAC 69A-41</p>

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		<p>"The home shall not be heated by un-vented gas-fired space heaters or oil heaters unless they are equipped with an oxygen depletion sensor and the home has a carbon monoxide alarm. All gas-fired devices shall be equipped with an automatic pilot gas shut-off control. All electrical wiring shall meet required building codes."</p>	
F. Transportation	<p>Applicants must ensure that the family has reliable, legal and safe transportation with safety restraints, as appropriate for the child. Reliable transportation would include a properly maintained vehicle or access to reliable public transportation, if one is owned; legal transportation would include having a valid driving license, insurance and registration as appropriate and safe transportation would include safety restraints and only adults in the home having a driving record in good standing transport the child.</p>	<p>It is recommended that this language be revised to take into consideration the transporting of children by individuals deemed appropriate by the licensed foster parent.</p> <p>Florida's requirements outline that foster parents are required to abide by the state traffic laws to include the transportation of foster children. Florida does not restrict transportation of foster child to only the adults in the home. Per the prudent parenting standard outlined in Florida Statutes 409.145(3), foster parent may use thoughtful parental decision-making to determine the transporting of a foster child by a trusted individual who has a properly maintained vehicle, having valid driving license, insurance, and registration as appropriate and safe transportation,</p>	<p>FAC 65C-13.030(7)(i), Florida Statutes 316, and Florida Statutes 409.145(3)</p>

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G. Training	<p>Applicants must complete pre-licensing training on the following topics: legal rights, roles, responsibilities and expectations of foster parents; agency structure, purpose, policies, and services; laws and regulations; the impact of childhood trauma; managing child behaviors; first aid (including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the ages of the children in placement) and medication administration; and the importance of maintaining meaningful connections between the child and parents, including regular visitation. Foster parents must participate in ongoing training to receive instruction to support their parental roles and ensure the parent is up to date with agency requirements. Further, this training may also include child-specific training and/or may address issues relevant to the general population of children in foster care.</p>	<p>States should be allowed flexibility in the requirement that applicants complete CPR training, specifically CPR should not be a pre-licensing training requirement.</p>	