

CHAPTER 112  
LICENSING AND REGULATION OF CHILD FOSTER CARE FACILITIES

[Prior to 7/1/83, Social Services[770] Ch 112]

[Prior to 2/11/87, Human Services[498]]

**441—112.1(237) Applicability.** This chapter relates to licensing procedures for all child foster care facilities authorized by Iowa Code chapter 237. Rules relating to specific types of facilities are located in 441—Chapter 113, “Licensing and Regulation of Foster Family Homes,” 441—Chapter 114, “Licensing and Regulation of All Group Living Foster Care Facilities for Children,” 441—Chapter 115, “Licensing and Regulation of Comprehensive Residential Facilities for Children,” and 441—Chapter 116, “Licensing and Regulation of Residential Facilities for Mentally Retarded Children.”

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 237.

[ARC 8010B, IAB 7/29/09, effective 10/1/09]

**441—112.2(237) Definitions.**

*“Applicant:”*

1. The applicant for a foster family home license is the foster parent or parents.
2. For a proprietary child caring facility, the applicant is the owner of the facility.
3. For facilities having a board of directors, the applicant may be the president of the board or the board’s designee.

*“Community residential facility”* means a facility which provides care for children who are considered unable to live in a family situation due to social, emotional or physical disabilities but are capable of interacting in a community environment with a minimum amount of supervision. The facility provides 24-hour care including board and room. Community resources are used for education, recreation, medical, social and rehabilitation services. The facility is responsible for planning the daily activities of the children, discipline, guidance, peer relationships, and recreational programs.

*“Comprehensive residential facility”* means a facility which provides care and treatment for children who are unable to live in a family situation due to social, emotional, or physical disabilities and who require varying degrees of supervision as indicated in the individual treatment plan. Care includes room and board. Services include the internal capacity for individual, family, and group treatment. These services and others provided to the child shall be under the administrative control of the facility. Community resources may be used for medical, recreational, and educational needs. Comprehensive residential facilities have higher staff to client ratios than community residential facilities and may use control rooms, locked cottages, mechanical restraints, and chemical restraints when these controls meet licensing requirements.

*“Director’s designee:”*

1. For group facilities, the director’s designee is the chief of the bureau of protective services.
2. For foster family homes, the designee is the department of human services’ service area manager.

*“Foster family home”* means a home in which an individual person or married couple who wishes to provide or is providing, for a period exceeding 24 consecutive hours, board, room, and care for a child in a single family living unit.

*“Group facility”* means a community residential facility, a comprehensive residential facility, or a residential facility for mentally retarded children.

*“Residential facility for mentally retarded children”* means any residential facility which serves children who meet the definition of mentally retarded as defined in Iowa Code chapter 222.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 237.3 and 237.5.

**441—112.3(237) Application for license.**

**112.3(1) Right to apply.** Any adult individual or agency has the right to apply for a license.

a. *Foster family care.* A person wishing to apply to be a foster parent shall contact the department’s recruitment and retention contractor at 1-800-243-0756 to request an application packet. This procedure also applies to:

- (1) Persons wishing to care for children placed through any public or private agency.
- (2) A relative who is caring for a child directly placed by the child's parents, guardians, or another relative and who wishes to be licensed as a foster parent.

*b. Group care.* A person wishing to apply for a group care license shall contact the department:

- (1) Through the "Child Welfare" link on the department's Web site, [www.dhs.iowa.gov](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov); or
- (2) By mail to the DHS Division of Child and Family Services, Attn: Group Care Licensing, 1305 East Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114.

**112.3(2) Decision to operate a facility.**

*a.* When an applicant has reached a decision to operate a foster family home, the applicant shall complete Form 470-0689, Foster Family Home License Application.

*b.* When an applicant has reached a decision to operate a group facility, the applicant shall complete Form 470-0723, Application for License or Certificate of Approval.

**112.3(3) Withdrawal of an application.** The applicant shall report the withdrawal of an application promptly to the department.

**112.3(4) Evaluation of the application.** Each application will be evaluated by the department to ensure that all standards are met.

*a.* Before it results in adverse action, a founded abuse report on a director, a sole proprietor involved in the facility's operation, or any facility staff shall be evaluated by the department to determine if the abuse merits prohibition of employment or licensure.

*b.* The department shall evaluate all founded child abuse on a case-by-case basis. Considerations shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) The facility's response (e.g., immediate termination of involved staff).
- (2) Whether the abuse was an isolated incident or is symptomatic of a broader, systemic problem.

**112.3(5) Reports and information.** Requested reports and information relevant to the licensing determination shall be furnished to the department by the applicant.

**112.3(6) Applications for renewal.**

*a.* The department or its agent shall send the licensee an application for renewal 90 days before the license expires. Applications for license renewal shall be made on the form specified in subrule 112.3(2).

*b.* Applications for renewal shall be made at least 30 but no more than 90 days before the license expires. Applications for renewal of a group care license shall be submitted to the address in subparagraph 112.3(1)"b"(2). Applications for renewal of a foster family home license shall be submitted to the recruitment and retention contractor.

*c.* The department shall approve or deny an application for license renewal through the same process as that used for the original application.

**112.3(7) Notification.**

*a. Foster family homes.*

(1) The department shall notify an applicant of the approval or denial of an initial license within 140 days of the date that the applicant begins the preservice training required in 441—subrule 113.8(1). When preservice training is waived, the department shall notify the applicant of approval or denial within 120 days of the date that the training waiver is granted.

(2) The department shall notify a licensee of the approval or denial of license renewal within 90 days of reapplication.

*b. Group facilities.* The department shall notify a group facility of approval or denial of a license within 90 days of application or reapplication.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.5.

[ARC 8010B, IAB 7/29/09, effective 10/1/09]

#### **441—112.4(237) License.**

**112.4(1)** A new license shall be obtained when the licensee moves or the facility is remodeled.

**112.4(2)** A new license shall be requested when the facility wishes to be licensed for a different number of children.

**112.4(3)** When corrective action is completed on or before the date specified on a provisional license, a full license shall be issued for the remainder of the licensure term.

**112.4(4)** When the corrective action is not completed by the date specified on a provisional license, a full license shall be denied.

**112.4(5)** The department shall issue Form 470-0727, Certificate of License, without cost to any foster family that meets the standards. The department shall issue Form 470-3623, Certificate of License, without cost to any group facility that meets the standards. The department may offer consultation to assist applicants in meeting the standards.

**112.4(6)** A foster family license shall be approved for a term of one year. A group facility license shall be approved for a term of one to three years according to the following criteria:

- a. A one-year license may be approved for all new agencies that meet licensure standards.
- b. A two-year license may be approved upon completion of a survey for a renewal license when:
  - (1) Some health or safety concerns have been identified, but they are determined to be minor or easily corrected;
  - (2) Some complaints against a facility have been substantiated, but they are determined to be minor; and
  - (3) Deficiencies that have been identified are determined to be minor or easily corrected.
- c. A three-year license may be approved upon completion of a survey for a renewal license when:
  - (1) No health or safety deficiencies have been identified;
  - (2) There have either been no substantiated complaints against the facility or, if substantiated, complaints have been determined not to be serious or severe; and
  - (3) A facility has no founded incidents of child abuse by facility staff.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 237.3 and 237.5.

#### **441—112.5(237) Denial.**

**112.5(1)** The department shall deny the license application when:

- a. The minimum standards set forth in these rules are not met and a provisional license is inappropriate or disapproved by the director's designee.
- b. For just cause.
- c. The applicant, as a sole proprietor or a foster family home parent, or any person residing in the foster family home other than a foster child, or any facility staff, has been convicted of a crime unless an evaluation of the crime has been made by the department which concludes that the crime does not merit prohibition of employment or licensure.
- d. The applicant, as a sole proprietor or foster family home parent, or any person residing in the foster family home other than a foster child, or any facility staff, has a record of founded child abuse unless an evaluation of the founded abuse has been made by the department which concludes that the abuse does not merit prohibition of employment or licensure.
- e. The application is fraudulent, which means that the applicant has knowingly made fraudulent statements or has knowingly concealed information.

**112.5(2)** Reapplications shall be denied:

- a. For the same reasons as original applications.
- b. For the same reasons as listed in the grounds for revocation.
- c. When the foster family applicant's license has been denied or revoked within the 12 months before the date of reapplication. Denial for this reason does not require a licensing study.
- d. If the foster family refuses to engage as a resource to a foster child's birth parents when engagement can be done in a way that does not put the foster family or the foster child at risk of harm.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.5.

[ARC 8010B, IAB 7/29/09, effective 10/1/09]

#### **441—112.6(237) Revocation.**

**112.6(1) Mandatory.** The department shall revoke the license for the following reasons unless subrule 112.6(3) applies:

- a. When the facility is misusing funds furnished by the department.
- b. When the facility is operating without due regard to the health, sanitation, hygiene, comfort, or well-being of the children in the facility.
- c. When the director or sole proprietor involved in the operation of the facility, or foster parent, or any person residing in the foster home other than a foster child, or any facility staff has been convicted of a crime unless an evaluation of the crime has been made by the department which concludes that the crime does not merit prohibition of employment or licensure.
- d. When there is a founded abuse report on a foster family home parent, any person residing in a foster family home other than a foster child, a director or sole proprietor who is involved in the facility's operation, or any facility staff, unless an evaluation of the founded abuse has been made by the department which concludes that the abuse does not merit prohibition of employment or licensure.
- e. Rescinded, effective November 1, 1987.

**112.6(2) *Optional.*** Licenses may be revoked for any of the following reasons unless subrule 112.6(3) applies:

- a. The foster family fails to notify the licensing worker when moving to a new home within 30 days after the date of moving.
- b. Rescinded, effective July 1, 1987.
- c. The foster family or facility fails to meet any or all requirements of the placement agreement.
- d. Rescinded, effective July 1, 1987.
- e. Rescinded, effective July 1, 1987.
- f. The child foster care facility fails to continue to comply with all of the licensing requirements in both law and regulation.
- g. The foster family or the staff of a licensed group facility refuses to cooperate with an unannounced visit.

**112.6(3) *Exceptions.*** The license for a foster family home shall not be revoked when there are 30 or fewer days until the date the license expires.

The foster family home shall be advised in writing that a reapplication may be denied and the reasons for the possible denial. The foster family home license may be suspended immediately pursuant to rule 441—112.9(237).

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 237.3 and 237.5.

**441—112.7(237) Provisional license.**

**112.7(1) *Statement of reasons for provisional licenses.*** Provisional licenses shall be accompanied by a statement of the reasons for the provisional license, the standards that have not been met, the date that the facility must make required changes to meet standards.

**112.7(2) *Corrective action.*** The facility shall furnish the licensing agency with a plan of action to correct deficiencies listed that resulted in the provisional license. The plan shall give specific dates upon which the corrective action will be completed.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.5.

**441—112.8(237) Adverse actions.** Notice of adverse actions and the right to appeal the licensing decision shall be given to applicants and licensees in accordance with 441—Chapter 7. Any issues of placement or payment are independent of the licensing decision and right of appeal.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.5.

**441—112.9(237) Suspension.**

**112.9(1) *Types of suspension.*** There are two types of suspension of a license.

- a. Emergency suspensions are to prevent persons from providing foster care by suspending their license until it is revoked or denied.
- b. Time-limited suspensions are to prevent persons from providing foster care by suspending their license until a deficiency in the home or facility is corrected.

**112.9(2) Requirements for emergency suspension.** The emergency suspension of a license by the director or designee shall occur only when all of the following conditions exist:

- a. The licensee fails to meet licensing requirements.
- b. There are sufficient grounds for revocation on denial of the license.
- c. The health, safety, and welfare of any child placed in the home or facility requires immediate action.
- d. The existence of the condition requiring suspension is documented in the licensee's record.

**112.9(3) Requirements for time-limited suspensions.** The time-limited suspension of a license by the director or designee shall occur only when all of the following conditions exist:

- a. The licensee fails to meet licensing requirements.
- b. The health, safety, and welfare of any child placed in the home or facility requires immediate action.
- c. The existence of the condition requiring suspension is documented in the licensee's record.
- d. The condition requiring the suspension can be corrected by the licensee to meet licensing requirements.
- e. If the condition were corrected, a full license would be issued.
- f. The licensee signs a written statement acknowledging the existence of the condition, citing the law or rule violated, and making a commitment to correct the condition within a specific time period, not to exceed the period of the license.

**112.9(4) Effective period of suspensions.** A suspension shall be effective on the date the notice is received by the licensee and shall remain in effect until one of the following occurs:

- a. The department withdraws the suspension due to a change in conditions in the home or facility.
- b. The court orders the license reinstated.
- c. The action is reversed by a final decision in accordance with 441—Chapter 7.
- d. For emergency suspensions, a revocation or denial becomes effective and the license is rescinded.
- e. The licensing period expires.
- f. For time-limited suspensions, the period of suspension ends.

**112.9(5) Method and content of notice.** The notice of suspension shall be sent by restricted certified mail or personal service and shall include the following:

- a. The condition requiring the suspension.
- b. The specific law or rule violated.
- c. The type of suspension.
- d. For an emergency suspension, the adverse action being sought by the department.
- e. For a time-limited suspension, the duration of the suspension.

**112.9(6) Right to appeal suspension.** The licensee has the right to appeal the suspension of the license, but initiation of an appeal does not alter the suspension.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 237.3 and 237.5.

[ARC 8010B, IAB 7/29/09, effective 10/1/09]

#### **441—112.10(232) Mandatory reporting of child abuse.**

**112.10(1) Mandatory reporters.** The following foster care providers shall make a report, in accordance with Iowa Code section 232.69, whenever they reasonably believe a child for whom they are providing foster care has suffered abuse:

- a. Any social worker who is employed by a licensed child foster care facility and who works with foster children.
- b. Any licensed foster parent providing child foster care.

**112.10(2) Required training.** Within one year of becoming a mandatory reporter, and every five years thereafter, any person required to make a report under subrule 112.10(1) shall complete two hours of training relating to the identification and reporting of child abuse.

**112.10(3) Training provider.**

*a.* If the foster care provider is a social worker employed by a licensed child foster care facility, the employer shall be responsible for providing the required training in child abuse identification and reporting.

*b.* If the foster care provider is a licensed foster parent, the foster parent shall be responsible for obtaining the required two-hour training in child abuse identification and reporting as part of a continuing education program required under Iowa Code section 232.69 and chapter 272C and approved by the department of public health.

**112.10(4) Training content.**

*a.* Training in child abuse identification shall include physical and behavioral signs of physical abuse, denial of critical care and sexual abuse.

*b.* Training in child abuse reporting shall include reporting requirements and procedures.

**112.10(5) Training documentation.**

*a.* If the foster care provider is a social worker employed by a licensed child foster care facility, the employer shall document in the employee's personnel record the content and amount of training.

*b.* If the foster care provider is a licensed foster parent, the foster parent shall be responsible for securing documentation of the training content, amount, and provider, and shall forward the documentation to the department's recruitment and retention contractor, which will provide a copy to the department licensing worker for the service area where the family resides for inclusion in the licensing file.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 232.69.

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